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Hafa Adai!

75¢

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Yumul says he OK'd purchase order for meals of H2-B workers

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REPORTER

Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC chief executive officer Ray N. Yumul has disclosed that he signed the purchase order for under $2,500 worth of food stuff for the preparation of meals of IPI's H2B foreign workers.

Speaking at the House of Representatives Committee on Gaming's public hearing at the House chamber last Thursday, Yumul said he did recall signing that purchase and that he already assigned that in the past two weeks.

Yumul discussed the purchase for meals in response to Committee on Gaming chair Rep. Edwin K. Propst's (D-

See YUMUL on Page 4

1 dead in Puerto Rico collision

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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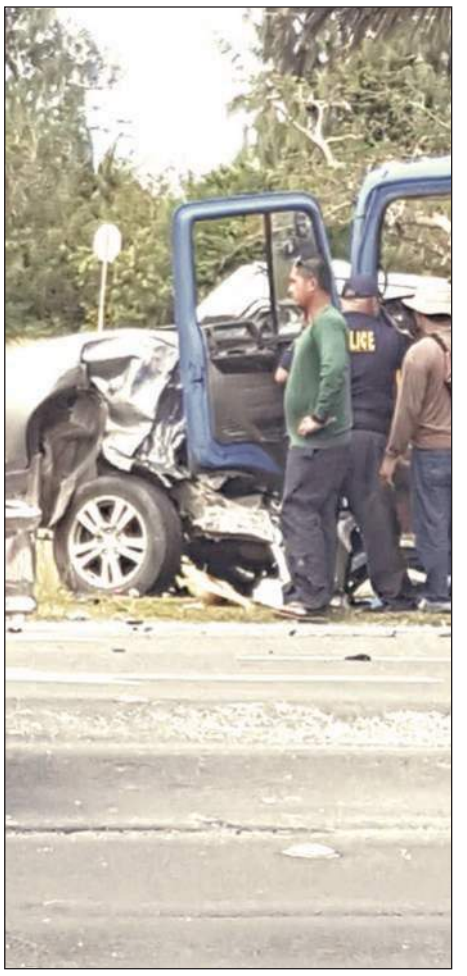
REPORTER

» Another passenger in ICU
» Motorbike fatality on Tinian last Sunday

One man was killed while another sustained critical injuries early afternoon yesterday during a vehicular collision in Puerto Rico on Saipan that saw one of the victims being resuscitated by the side of the road, as shown in videos of the incident that were widely shared on social media.

See DEAD on Page 4



These photos that were widely shared on social media and WhatsApp yesterday shows images taken by passing motorists of the car accident yesterday in Puerto Rico.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

NMC goes back to 80 hours

By JUSTINE NAUTA
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REPORTER

Thanks to the Coronavirus Aid, Response, and Economic Security Act—or CARES Act—the Northern Marianas College was able to go back to 80-hour pay periods for their locally funded staff that took effect in the first part of January 2021.

According to interim NMC president Frankie Eliptico, it was only the locally funded employees that were earning less than 32 hours per week that were

See NMC on Page 4

1 more tests positive for COVID-19

» No clear vaccination date for the public

By JUSTINE NAUTA
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REPORTER

Even as one person tested positive for COVID-19 yesterday, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. chief executive officer Esther Muña stated that there is still no clear date as to when the rest of the public will get vaccinated.

See COVID-19 on Page 4

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

LEGEND:
- **Red:** Least safe
- **Orange**
- **Yellow**
- **Blue**
- **Green:** Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

AT A GLANCE

As of 6pm, Feb. 1, 2021

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	7,587	21	7,608
Recovered	7,355	20	7,375
Active	81	21	102
Deaths	129	0	129
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			115,405

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	132	1	133
Traced via Travel Screening	106	1	107
Traced via Community Screening	26	0	26
Deaths	2	0	2
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			26,131*
Days since last community transmission			166

*Total count includes the number of persons tested on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. With guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CHCC has opted not to report active and recovered cases.

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.

INSIDE

BUSINESS
Docomo Pacific donates 3 Aura Air units to the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.
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ASIA
Myanmar military television says that the military was taking control of the country for one year.
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LIFE & STYLE
The valuable relief by Christoforos Savva, Cyprus' avant-garde artist of the 1960s, is found anew.
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Local

Guerrero rallies Chamber to adopt fundamental shift in tourism strategy

By IVA MAURIN
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REPORTER

A call for a strong, better Marianas is on the line, and the Saipan business community must be at the forefront, helping lead the way, according to new Saipan Chamber of Commerce president Joseph C. Guerrero soon after being sworn into office last Saturday at the Saipan World Resort's Royal Taga Hall.

"The work is in front of us," he said, speaking before an audience of business owners and changemakers at the nonprofit's annual gala.

Part of what must be done, he said, is aligning the work the business community does with the goals of Governor's Council of Economic Advisers to pivot the CNMI's tourism industry toward attracting higher-end tourists, limiting visitor arrivals to sustainable levels, to ensure that the islands' natural resources are sustained.

This is in contrast, he said, to the decades-old model of "selling" the islands to as many travelers as possible, who then increase the amount of stress on the local environment, public infrastructure and services, and the community, yet with lower returns on investment.

IVA MAURIN

Associate Judge Kenneth L. Govendo, leftmost, swears in the Saipan Chamber of Commerce's new officers and board members, which include, from second from left, Velma Palacios of IT&E, Das Krishnan of Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan, Janice Tenorio of IT&E, Marcia Calvo of Calvo's Insurance, Joe Guerrero of Naked Fish Bar & Grill, Shayne Villanueva of Aon Insurance, and Michael Johnson of Deloitte, at the nonprofit's annual gala last Saturday at the Saipan World Resort's Royal Taga Hall.

"It's imperative [that] every business and government agency adopt this fundamental shift in strategy and carefully review its potential impact on their operations. There will be some losses and some gains, but with this new mindset and direction, our people, our islands, and our community will be the most important of winners," he added.

The proposed changes, which many of the Chamber members have started to implement, would include leasing newer and more appealing lodging and amenities to include dining and bar facilities, ensuring that sightseeing destinations are clean and well-maintained, and the establishment of more attractive personal care and other service businesses that would meet the demands of high-end visitors.

"The transformation of Fiesta Resort [& Spa Saipan] to a Crowne Plaza Resort is only the beginning. Hyatt Regency is expected to pour substantial investments in their facilities in the near future, should their lease be renewed," he said.

Guerrero also spoke of the urgent need to push improvements to public infrastructure, such as a new Beach Road from the Pacific Islands Club Saipan to the American Memorial Park, which will have sidewalks, bike lanes, and other features to make it safe for all, as well as the "iconic stretch of road" from the Kingfisher Golf Course to the Bird Island lookout.

"Garapan Core will receive the much-needed major facelift, with new pavement, trail and street lighting, and regulations to hold establishments to a higher standard to provide a safe, clean, and attractive environment for both residents and visitors to safely dine, shop, and relax."

The new president also took pride in the new Northern Marianas College that is being built.

The 'Hafa Adai Tirow' spirit

Guerrero also appealed to each and every member of the Chamber to embrace the "Hafa Adai Tirow" spirit and taking pride in the uniqueness of the indigenous culture.

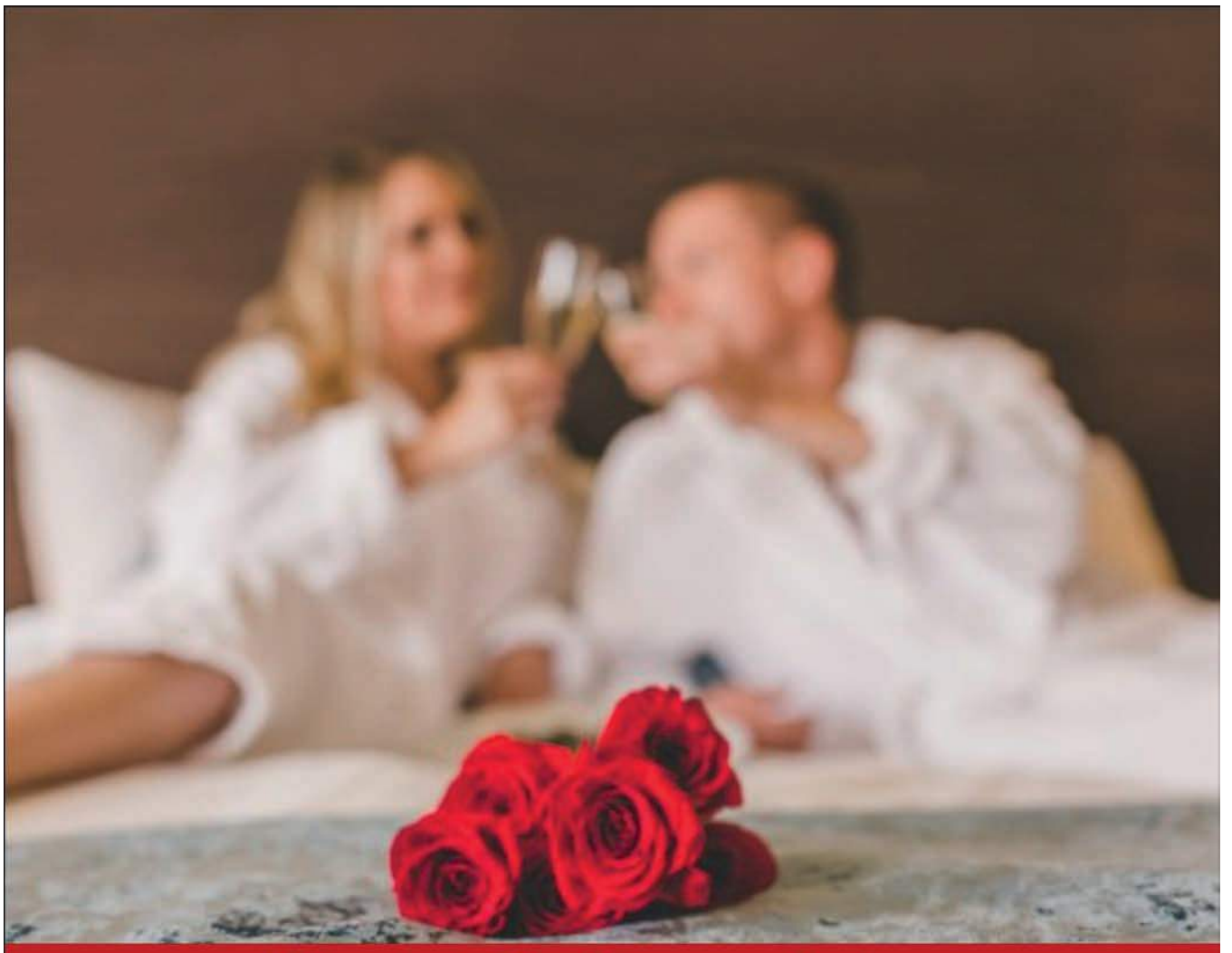
"Our islands' indigenous people make us unique, and this should be a big part of how we attract high-end travelers. …We need to share and display the Chamorro and Refaluwasch culture, language, music, history, and art throughout our businesses and organizations," he said.

The Chamber president reiterated the need for its members to promote the "Hafa Adai Tirow" pledge, in partnership with the Marianas Visitors Authority, the Indigenous Affairs Office, the Carolinian Affairs Office, and other stakeholders.

Guerrero expressed appreciation to businesses such as the Joeten Supermarkets, Inas' Kitchen, Hyatt Regency Saipan, Great Harvest Bread, Naked Fish, and The Shack for implementing the "Hafa Adai" or "Tirow" greeting to customers, as well as artists in companies such as 670 Rocksteady and Tribe Marianas for their vision to build awareness and pride of the Marianas.

"It's our turn to pitch in and join this cause," he said.

Aside from Guerrero, the Saipan Chamber of Commerce also welcomed a new set of officers and board members, including Shayne Villanueva of Aon Insurance (vice president), Marcia Calvo of Calvo's Insurance (Secretary), Mike Johnson of Deloitte (Treasurer), Das Krishnan of Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan, Velma Palacios of IT&E, Janice Tenorio of IT&E, Alex Sablan of TanHoldings, and Glen Hunter of The Shack.



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Complimentary Bottle of House Wine with Dinner
Complimentary Early Check-In at 10:00am | Late Check-Out at 5:00pm
$220.00 (+15% Tax)

Deluxe Oceanfront Suite
1 Night Stay in our Deluxe Oceanfront Suite
Romantic Valentine's Day 5-Course Dinner at Kevin's for Two
Complimentary Bottle of House Wine with Dinner
Complimentary Early Check-In at 10:00am | Late Check-Out at 5:00pm
$350.00 (+15% Tax)

Valentine's Day Dinner at Kevin's
Romantic Valentine's Day 5-Course Dinner
Complimentary Bottle of House Wine with Dinner (1 Bottle for every 2 guests)
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Public warned of dangerous sea conditions

Inexperienced swimmers should remain out of the water due to dangerous surf conditions.

A high surf advisory is now in effect until 6pm today, Tuesday. Also, there is a high risk for rip currents that is now in effect through next Monday night. A small craft advisory in effect until 6pm tomorrow, Wednesday.

Based on the information received from the National Weather Service in Tiyan, Guam, and compiled at the CNMI Emergency Operations Center State Warning Point, large breaking waves of up to 10 feet are expected in the surf zone for north facing reefs, while dangerous rip currents will be along north and east facing reefs of all Mariana Islands.

These conditions will create dangerous swimming and surfing conditions and localized beach erosion. Rip currents can sweep even the best swimmers away from shore into deeper water.

Residents of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota are advised to avoid venturing out near reef lines facing north and east facing reefs. Swim near a lifeguard. If caught in a rip current, relax and float. Don't swim against the current. If able, swim in a direction following the shoreline. If unable to escape, face the shore and call or wave for help.

Meanwhile, east winds 15 to 25 knots and seas of 9 to 12 feet are expected along Saipan, Tinian, and Rota coastal waters until at least 6pm Wednesday. This means conditions will be hazardous to small craft.

Highest seas will be on Tinian and Saipan waters through today, Tuesday, then will spread southward.

Inexperienced mariners, especially those operating smaller vessels, should avoid navigating in hazardous conditions. ***(PR)***

'CNMI ranks among lowest in nation on LGBTQ+ protections'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The CNMI ranks among the lowest in the nation in terms of policies in place that provide protections for LGBTQ+ residents against discrimination and in the areas of health insurance, employment and the workplace, and housing, according to House Committee on Health and Welfare chair Rep. Christina Sablan (D-Saipan).

"We can and should change that," said Sablan in her opening statement during the committee's first public hearing last Friday at the House's chamber.

» Lawmaker acknowledges that the CNMI has done remarkable job so far against COVID-19

Advancing the equality and well-being of the LGBTQ+ community in the CNMI was among the five issues that, according to Sablan, are key priorities that the 22nd House leadership has identified that fall squarely within the committee's jurisdiction.

LGBTQ+ stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (or sometimes questioning), and others. The plus represents other sexual identities.

Sablan also asked committee members to support the reintroduction and passage of the Commonwealth's first Hate Crimes bill that Rep. Donald Manglona (Ind-Rota) originally introduced in the 21st Legislature. She urged committee members to work with their colleagues in the 22nd Legislature and community partners to see the bill through to enactment.

Sablan said the primary goal of Friday's meeting is to lay out the committee's legislative agenda and its priorities for calendar year 2021, and to open the discussion with their partners and constituents and accept their feedback.

The committee's four other priorities are to monitor the CNMI's COVID-19 response and efforts to protect the health and welfare of the community, to expand access to health care in the Marianas, to reform the medical referral program, and to raise revenue of health care and increase investments in the CNMI's health care system.

She acknowledged that, on the whole, the Commonwealth has done a remarkable job thus far in keeping the worst impacts of the pandemic at bay. She thanked the leadership of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. and the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, as well as the cooperation of the community.

Sablan said Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) also did a tremendous work in securing hundreds of millions of federal dollars for health care, testing, vaccinations, unemployment assistance, food aid, emergency housing assistance, and more.

Sablan said other House committees have expressed an interest in reviewing the management and expenditures of all funds, both federal and local, going to support the Commonwealth's COVID-19 response. She said her committee has a role to play to ensure that funds are monitored closely and that benefits are reaching the people who need them, particularly through the Commonwealth's health and social welfare programs.

On expanding access to health care, Sablan said Public Law 21-35, the Appropriations Act of Fiscal Year 2021, directs the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. to report to the Legislature by March this year on policy options to expanding access to care to reach the CNMI's goal of universal coverage in the Marianas. She said one major avenue for expanding access to care was made possible in another recently enacted law, Public Law 21-28, which authorizes the Medicaid Agency to offer a buy-in program to residents who currently lack health insurance and would not otherwise qualify for regular Medicaid. She said they will be inviting the Medicaid Office to brief the committee members on this and other areas of the program, and how they can be of support.

On reforming the medical referral program, Sablan said the CNMI government exceeds in the millions of dollars every year its appropriated budget for off-island medical referral. In 2020 alone, the CNMI spent over $11.6 million on off-island medical referral, she said, yet only a little over $1 million had been allotted for the year.

Sablan said her committee will work with CHCC, the Torres-Palacios administration, the Medical Referral Office, and other policy experts to review the program, and identify areas where services could be improved or offered on-island or through telemedicine, and where savings might be realized.

"We also must be involved in monitoring the proposed transition of the program out of the Governor's Office to the CHCC, and developing legislation to establish parameters for off-island referrals," she said.

Rep. Leila Staffler (D-Saipan) is the committee's vice chairperson, and members are Reps. Sheila Babauta (D-Saipan), Manglona, and Blas Jonathan Tenorio Attao (R-Saipan).

CHCC Esther Muña and her team testified at the meeting.

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‘OGM still in talks whether to open web portal for rental aid’

FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The Office of Grants Management under the Office of the Governor is still talking whether a website portal will be created for those who intend to apply for housing rental assistance and utility relief through the Emergency Rental Assistance Program, according to press secretary Kevin Bautista.

Speaking at a radio news briefing Friday, Bautista said OGM does not necessarily have the same website infrastructure as the Department of Finance with the stimulus portal. “This may also require proof of documentation. So this may include some physical interaction with program staff who are going to be accepting the applications,” he said.

Bautista said Gov. Ralph DLG. Torres, Lt. Gov. Arnold Palacios, and OGM continue to work closely to make sure that they implement the program the right way based on federal compliance.

He said they want to make sure they have the manpower and the resources in place, so that they can seamlessly and efficiently accept applications.

The CNMI recently received $10.4 million for rental assistance and utility relief through the Emergency Rental Assistance Program under the recently enacted Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act. The program aims to reduce evictions and to keep citizens in stable homes, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Out of $400 million made available to U.S. territories, the CNMI was allotted $10,400,669 based on the 2019-2020 population estimates. Guam received $33.6 million.

Eligible households may receive up to 12 months of assistance, plus an additional three months depending on the household’s circumstances.

An eligible household is defined as a renter household in which at least one or more individuals meets the following criteria:

■ Qualifies for unemployment or has experienced a reduction in household income, incurred significant costs, or experienced a financial hardship due to COVID-19.

■ Demonstrates a risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability; and

■ Has a household income at or below 80% of the area median ($19,201; CNMI Department of Commerce; 2016 Household Income and Expenditure Survey).

Bautista said they will be working with the Department of Labor for people who have been considered gainfully unemployed as a result of the pandemic.

“So we’ll be using the same criteria, working with the CNMI Department of Labor to make sure that those folks are properly defined as being unemployed,” he said.

He said they will also be working on directly with the applicants to ensure that they have proper documents, that they have, in fact, been unemployed or have reduced hours, or furloughed as a result of the pandemic.

“So that criteria will stay in place,” said Bautista.

One of the key details of this program is that if the household is already availing of some sort of rental assistance, whether it be through the Northern Marianas Housing Corp., Karidat Social Services, or some other programs where they’re getting housing rental assistance, they won’t be eligible for this aid.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

DEAD

From Page 1

The collision between an Artman Corp. dump truck and a silver Honda Ridgeline pickup truck occurred at around 1pm yesterday along Puerto Rico, Middle Road also caused a massive traffic jam in the area.

Department of Public Safety spokesperson Dre Pangelinan confirmed in a statement that the collision resulted in one fatality that, to his knowledge, is the first traffic-related fatality on Saipan this year. The other victim is now in the Commonwealth Health Center’s intensive care unit.

Pangelinan said the driver of the silver Ridgeline pickup truck was released without injuries while his two passengers bore the brunt of the crash. The driver and passenger of the Artman truck were also later released at the scene, Pangelinan said.

As of press time, Pangelinan had no other details on the incident.

In interviews with bystanders, one man who works at a nearby establishment believes the two victims, believed to be South Asian, were catapulted from the silver Ridgeline due to the impact of the crash because they were seated on the truck’s bed.

“As soon as we looked out the window, we saw two individuals on the ground from the pickup truck. We believe they flew out of the truck from the impact. I believe they were in the back of the truck,” he said.

The Artman truck was reportedly southbound while the silver Ridgeline was along Middle Road and turning into the Smiling Cove Marina intersection.

“The Artman truck was headed south and the pickup truck was heading into the marina. They were making a left turn into the marina. The lights were working. I’m sure one of them ran a red light but I’m not sure who,” he said.

He said there were a total of five men involved in the incident: two were in the Artman truck and the other three were in the silver Ridgeline.

Sources said that soon after the crash, Dr. Norma S. Ada, who has a clinic in the building fronting the accident site, was joined by a nurse practitioner who immediately responded to the scene in an attempt to resuscitate the passengers on the ground.

First responders from the Department of Public Safety and Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services came shortly after.

Meanwhile, last Sunday, Jan. 31, at about 1:05am, DPS received a 911 call reporting a motorcycle crash at Tachogna Beach, Tinian. At the scene officers noticed an unresponsive male individual lying off the road a few feet away from a motorcycle. Medics transported the operator to the Tinian Health Center for a physical exam. DPS is currently awaiting final results from THC staff, but it reportedly was the CNMI’s first traffic-related fatality of the year.

Officers interviewed witnesses at the scene stated that the male operator was previously seen at the bar consuming alcoholic beverages before following a group to Taga Beach. Witnesses at the scene also stated that the operator continued driving the motorcycle from Taga Beach to Tachogna Beach, and toward Broadway before driving back toward Tachogna Beach.

Shortly after a loud sound was heard, witnesses rushed to the crash scene and called for police assistance.

This crash investigation remains ongoing but, based on evidence left at the scene, the operator was traveling south before hitting a curb, entering a sidewalk, and into a grassy area. The operator’s helmet was found about 40 feet from the operator and was found to have been used improperly as the chin strap was tied into a knot on one side which did not allow it to be attached to the retention side.

YUMUL

From Page 1

Saipan) question as to what IPI is doing to help these stranded foreign workers who have no money because they have no jobs and are relying on the community’s help.

Yumul said his understanding is that U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona’s ruling includes the humanitarian aspect of requiring IPI to feed these workers.

“I believe they are being fed. We’re allowed to have staff brought in to cook their meals, and that is part of the court order. So I don’t think that has been violated,” he said.

Propst said they appreciate that these workers are indeed receiving free meals and that they will discuss that with the workers, who attended that day’s House meeting.

As for the workers who are still here and are still awaiting payment of three-fourths of their contract guarantee, Propst said he understands that some workers have sought a lawyer and the matter will be litigated.

He said these workers are being told that they will have plane tickets and that they should leave before the first week of February. Yumul replied that he wants these workers paid to the extent possible that is in their contract.

“If it’s in the contract and if it’s been verified, and HR and finance says and provides me with a certified report, then I will insist that to my bosses,” he said. Otherwise, Yumul added, he would have a serious concern about staying on as CEO if it’s not dealt with. “When it comes to the law, I tend to be very straightforward,” he said.

Yumul also assured that, in reference to what Propst mentioned about Manglona’s ultimatum to sell IPI’s assets if the workers are not paid by March 1, 2021, “I’m not going to stand in the way of that. Rest assured that these folks will be paid

Propst said that’s a sign of good faith if the workers are to be paid. “Then that will give some hope not just for these workers, but for the community because we have to base everything on priorities,” the lawmaker said.

NMC

From Page 1

affected, while the federally funded employees remained at 40 hours per week. The locally funded staff were on a 64-hour biweekly schedule in fiscal years 2019 and 2020 prior to going back to 80 hours.

“We are thankful to the governor’s allocation of CARES [Act] education funds to NMC that helped the college resume 80 hours,” said Eliptico. “The funds helped the college significantly, especially as the institution continues to post strong enrollment numbers and more students are looking to NMC for their personal and professional growth

Aside from the reduced work hours, the college had also implemented cost-saving measures in 2019 and 2020. That included a reduction in expenditures for supplies, equipment, and other operations-related expenses; non-federal hiring, and restrictions on travel.

Yet even if employees were on austerity, Eliptico said they wanted to make sure that “the students didn’t feel the austerity.” That meant not a single class was cancelled.

Eliptico also disclosed that because of the reduced hours, it took a while for the college to go through with the demolition of the 13 of the 37 buildings that were destroyed by Super Typhoon Yutu in October 2018. These were buildings A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, Q, R, and S.

“We’ve been on a reduced operation and that has been really difficult for the institution, because we have, unlike many other institutions or agencies or organizations, been working to rebuild our campus, and with very limited hours, it’s hard to expedite a lot of contracts, procurement, and activities if your employees are at reduced hours,” said Eliptico.

Eliptico said he’s thankful to the Palacios-Torres administration, Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP), and the U.S. Congress for the CARES Act, which helped NMC resume 80 hours.

NMC recently completed its demolition of the 13 buildings and is now moving on with the next phase of rebuilding. According to Eliptico, they are already moving forward with the facilities master plan, which will establish the blueprint of future buildings of the campus. They expect to finish the main building—which NMC refers to as the flagship building—by 2022.

“We are thankful to the U.S. Department of Education, the governor, the NMC Board of Regents, the guidance of regulatory agencies, and other for their support and help with our recovery activities,” said Eliptico.

COVID-19

From Page 1

CHCC announced that one individual was confirmed positive for COVID-19 yesterday, bringing the CNMI’s total to 133. CHCC stated that the individual was identified by travel screening and confirmed diagnosis through testing upon arrival.

The individual has been safely in quarantine and was moved to the designated isolation area, the Kanoa Resort Alternative Care Site in Susupe, for monitoring. CHCC has already initiated contact tracing for the most immediate contacts of the new confirmed case, including passengers on the same flight.

In a text message interview with Muña, she said the CNMI is expecting a delivery of 11,000 COVID-19 vaccine doses on Feb. 4: a total of 7,800 Pfizer/BioNTech vaccines and 3,200 Moderna Inc. vaccines.

This will bring the total doses of the Pfizer vaccine to 21,450, according to the e-newsletter of Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP). Each individual needs two doses, 21 days apart, for maximum effectiveness.

The CNMI’s February allocation of the Moderna vaccine is 33% more than January’s allocation, for a total of 8,200 doses, the e-newsletter stated. Moderna, too, requires two injections for full effect.

The Moderna vaccine increase comes after the Biden administration announced plans to purchase an additional 100 million doses of both the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccine, increasing the total vaccine order for the United States from 400 million to 600 million doses.

Muña said the new shipments will help CHCC expand vaccinations to more groups on all three islands. When asked when will the public get vaccinated, she said it is unclear how many vaccinations the CNMI will actually get.

COVID-19 in Guam

Guam’s Department of Public Health and Social Services placed an order for 17,000 doses of the COVID-19 vaccines last Jan. 30 for the February allocation.

According to the Joint Information Center in Guam, DPHSS placed orders for both the Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccines. DPHSS’ Immunization Program ordered 9,200 doses of the Moderna vaccine and 7,800 doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine totaling 17,000 doses for February. JIC stated that both vaccines are anticipated to arrive within three to five business days.

According to JIC, a total of 28,183 residents have been vaccinated with either the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine. For the first dose, a total of 21,327 individuals, 2nd dose, 6,856 individuals, and 6,856 have been fully immunized.

Casino industry is either on 'life support or dead on arrival'

FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The Saipan casino industry: On life support or dead on arrival?

That is the question that even Rep. Edwin K. Propst (D-Saipan) doesn't know the answer.

Propst

Propst, who chairs the House Committee on Gaming that held its first public hearing last Thursday on Capital Hill, also assures that, contrary to criticisms and fears from some pro-casino lobbyists that the committee would harm the fledgling industry, "I want to state for the record: Even if we tried, even if we tried to the best of our ability, we could do no further harm."

Rep. Christina Sablan (D-Saipan), who is the committee's vice chairperson, said their support of the Commonwealth Casino Commission and CCC's efforts to enforce the laws and regulations of the Commonwealth and the obligations of the license agreement is key to creating the culture of compliance and respect for the rule of law that is needed in this industry, for the sake of the community and the CNMI's economic future.

"No more special favors for special interests, colleagues," Sablan said.

After listening to testimonies of former IPI workers at the same hearing, Propst said a few of them were criticized for questioning about this industry, which was "going to be the greatest investment."

"But make no mistake about it. When this thing was sold to the community, what where the promises made? Let's start with $7 billion," he said. "Look where we're at today. Look at the public comments. Listen to the public comments that we heard today. If you're heart wasn't touched or hurt by those comments today, I don't even know if we can call ourselves compassionate or human," referring to the testimonies of some former IPI workers.

He said those comments are not new to him, or to the members of the Legislature who have met with them previously.

Citing U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona Manglona's order against IPI that day, Propst said that's how bad things are with IPI. "So how do we make it better moving forward? First and foremost, before we even start pointing fingers and blaming COVID-19 and [super typhoons] Soudelor and Yutu and whatever excuses that we have, shortage of guest workers or whatever. We have something that we cannot deny, as you heard, through testimony by public comments," he said.

Propst said he is deeply concerned that history is about to repeat itself once again, this time with IPI. "And I'd like some answers to this. First and foremost, we have a group of workers that left back in September, October of last year. They left with the understanding that they would be paid, compensated, that money will be wired to them. I'm still in constant contact with them. Not one of them have been paid," he said. Propst said these employees were supposed to be paid 3/4th of their wages as they were promised, yet to date, not one of them has been paid.

"Now we're hearing from these workers, that they're ready to get tickets, that they have to leave. And that they will be paid at a later date. If you are in their shoes, would you get on that plane knowing fully well you most likely will never receive a payment? I don't think I would," Propst said.

When looking at competing priorities and everything that has to be paid, he said, IPI should take care of these workers and send them on their way home properly. "Pay them what they're owed. Pay them what they were promised. Nothing less will do with that," he said.

As for two months of having no electricity in the living quarters of these workers, Propst said when Yutu destroyed the islands, people were upset when they didn't have power. "It's not our culture. It's not who we are as a community. And I for one will not stand for that," the lawmaker said.

Sablan

He said that as these workers go home, they would tell people of their experience on the islands.

Propst asked CCC to do what they need to do to ensure this casino industry moves forward. "We need to ensure compliance. If it's not going to happen, then we have to ensure that we do not bow to the whims of IPI. We have been played for a long time. And if we want to make things better, then it comes with concessions," he said.

He said he is grateful to the U.S. Labor secretary for the lawsuit that is compelling IPI to pay its workers.

In the case of IPI's community benefit fund, Propst said it was secretive and that he even went to court over that. "Imagine that," he added. He said he is appreciative to the CCC counsel for disclosing the community benefit fund.

Sablan said the most important role that she can envision for the gaming committee is to foster what has been sorely lacking in the Commonwealth's gaming industry these past years, particularly in the casino industry—"and that is a culture of compliance."

"What we have developed instead is reminiscent quite frankly of an abusive relationship—this constant cycle of egregious violations of trust, followed by conflict, stern warnings, promises of change, promises of compliance, even some gaslighting and reinventing of history, and laws, and facts," Sablan said.

Propst did concede that he cannot blame newly-appointed IPI chief executive officer Ray Yumul for what has been happening at IPI since he has just been hired for the job.

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

ANTERINA RUBEN ROPON *Petitioner*
vs.
JERRY SAM JONES *Respondent,*

FCD-PA CIVIL ACTION NO. 20-0331

SUMMONS FOR PUBLICATION

TO THE ABOVE NAME RESPONDENT

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is on file with the court within thirty (30) days after service of the Summons upon you, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to the Petitioner whose address is P.O. Box 504942 CK, Saipan MP 96950 as soon as practical after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at Susupe, Saipan, MP 96950. It may be prepared for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or Mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice. If you fail to file and answer in accordance with this summons, judgement by default may be taken against you for relief in the complaint.

Dated this 13th day of January, 2021

/s/_____
CLERK OF COURT

To our valued subscribers:
PROTECTING YOUR PRIVACY IS OUR PRIORITY.
At IT&E, we do everything possible to protect your personal and account information.
Our customers have the right to restrict the use of, disclosure of, and access to any information that relates to the quantity, technical configuration, type, destination, or amount of use of their telecommunications services. This information is known as "Customer Proprietary Network Information" or CPNI.
In addition, to protect your privacy, CPNI can only be released to the account holder and individuals authorized by the account holder, and the requestor must provide the correct password.
Information about your rights and IT&E's CPNI policies can be found at store.ite.net/cpni or by calling (670) 682-4483 [CNMI] / (671) 922-4483 [GUAM] or by visiting any IT&E store.
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MCS ACADEMIC ACHIEVERS

Mount Carmel School congratulates these students for making it to the 2nd Quarter President's List and Honor Roll.

PRESIDENT'S LIST

Students must have a GPA of 4.00 or above and must attain character marks of VG or above.

1st Grade

- Aiden Ray Cepeda
- Aiesha Sadie Camacho
- Aleaya Bermudes
- Carina Guerrero
- Chloe Nicole Arnold
- Crystin Pangelinan
- Ezekiel Ma'Nu'l Villagomez
- Gabriella Jo Tenorio
- Jake Hiram Maratita
- Jamara Jayde Cabrera-Sablan
- Kaiya Isabel Pangelinan
- Khoen Alexander Coldeen Torres
- Lucia Jauhn Deleon Guerrero
- Maven Borja
- Naomi Elizabeth Benjamin
- Prescott Jonathan Cabrera
- Sinako Annette Leiyang-scheng Tagabuel
- Youngwoo Choi
- Yuna Yu
- Zane Fujihira

2nd Grade

- Aiyana Pangelinan
- Alesa Ilmova
- Anah Bellah Guerrero
- Chloe Jane Militante
- Clarise Garamonte
- Friella Huanne Dela Santa
- Ivan Fernand Fortades
- Jake Peter Deleon Guerrero Jr.
- Jonathan Zhang
- Kendra Elise Camacho
- Kirk Ivan De Perio
- Logan Propst
- Neia Dolana Noreyemal Tagabuel
- Okamura Jaxon Itisoorschigh Tagabuel
- Scarlett Shae Salas
- Sera Guerrero
- Seungwoo Lee
- Tone Yoshise
- Viane Johanna Magboo
- Vinae Jaydene Pua
- Vince Angelo Estella
- Yu Ma
- Zayne Reyes

3rd Grade

- Adelle Jane Kautz
- Aiyah Elise Igitol
- Amber Faith Militante
- Ava Carmina Sablan
- Avah Mae Delacruz
- Cali Jade Cabrera
- Chloe Anne Marie Matsunaga
- Chloe Cepeda
- Daniel Kang
- Ezaela Patrice Camacho
- Hyunseo Yun
- Jeongwoo Choi
- Ji Woo Lee
- Karl Angelo Diaz
- Kathleen Cano
- Kennani Vinae Villagomez
- Ki Eun Lee
- Lydia Xian
- Mechaet Masaki Rechucher
- Miana Dolores Delacruz
- Paige Kanae Cabrera
- Talina Aguon-Mcclure
- Victoria Eve Terlaje
- Von Derick Lauron

4th Grade

- Jamie Nicole Pereira
- Jaze Enzo San Nicolas
- Joey Claude Mostales
- Kainoa Tenorio
- Trisha Juliana Abuan

5th Grade

- Arstin Itibwulschigh Tagabuel
- Aya Santos
- Cassidee Jolina Flores
- Cecilia R. Villagomez
- Ciana Lei Demapan
- Cyril Michael Pangilinan
- Do Geon Kim
- Dylan Niric
- Gabriella Aundrea Inos
- Isabella Soledad Demapan
- Jadine Nicole Pangelinan
- Janessa Francine Arriola
- Jayson Jared Tagabuel
- Jener Franz Pineda
- Jessi Chen
- Julius Sheu
- Katherine Hwang
- Kayla Larson
- Kingston Isaiah Deleon Guerrero
- Layla Carmen Ann Palacios
- Siwoo Lee
- Tanner Larel Mcclure
- Ye Lynn Ha

6th Grade

- Akoni Jesus Matsumoto
- Carly Kate Dela Cruz
- Chan Seo Yeom
- Chan Woong Yeom
- Christine Rosanne Castro
- Christopher James Dela Cruz
- Hiromi Rosa Sasamoto
- Hope McQuay
- Iris Maleia Rasa
- Jeffrey Concepcion
- Jose Clarence Tenorio
- Juliana Magan Subang
- Justin Mallari
- Kaden Christian Propst
- Kaitlyn Alexza Drilon
- Ki Won Lee
- Maya Jae Jung
- Maya McQuay
- Naomi Skye Matsumoto
- Nicole Angela Pangilinan
- Patricia Matsumoto
- Sage R. Villagomez
- Sarah Angela Melchor
- Seungwoo Choi
- Stephanie Joyce Sevilla
- Taher Shakir
- Wayne Dominic Ano

7th Grade

- Ainsley Ancheta
- Asa Backe
- Ayanna Faith Matsumoto
- Camron Zavier Pangelinan
- Chae Eun Kim
- Emmanuel Pontiveros
- Gavril Myles Santiago
- Jessiana Tenorio
- Kate Nicole Cabalbag
- Kayli Ari Salas
- Leonard Jake Regalado
- Mikayla Castro
- Patricia Denielle Lugtu
- Quince Emanuele Tizon
- Raina Park
- Seunghee Jeon
- Sophia Tenorio
- Valerie Anne Estella
- Victor Nash Santos
- William Matthew Cano

8th Grade

- Ari James Toskas
- Audrein Jennifer Mallari
- Hitomi Rosa Sasamoto
- Irene Kim
- Irie Kane Camacho
- Jaeyun Jung
- Jamie Lee
- Jay Francis Dominic Pineda
- Kaeli Pathil
- Kelly Zheng
- Kenneth Castro
- Laizza Vianca Mallari
- Latisha Anne De Jesus
- Malina Rose Tenorio
- Princes Amanda Habal
- Tricia Antonnette Palacios
- Vayden Matagolai

9th Grade

- Avah Marie Torres
- Brandon Lee
- Jonathan Sheu
- Ruben Guerrero
- Tyana Kisha Tesiro
- Xin Wen Jin

10th Grade

- Brent Matthew Ortizo
- Donnie James Jr. Militante
- Francine Monique Albuen
- Gerald Jr. Deleon Guerrero
- Jazmyn Phoeme Lopez
- Jill Anne Marie Mallari
- Keehara Nielsen Baldazo
- Kina Dela Cruz
- Kyla Monique Cabrera
- Leopoldo Naraja
- Leunyce Regalado
- Manuel Jacinto Pangelinan
- Raven-Mae Driver
- Yurihana Rosa Sasamoto

11th Grade

- Aleia Santos
- Christian Guerrero
- Fiona Marielle Bucalig
- Hannah Lacap
- Hyunkyu Park
- Jeffrey Sheu
- Jeremiah Jerome Diaz
- Joshua Donovan Tenorio
- JunBeom Kim
- Larry Dean Cruz
- Monique Laura Duenas
- Raesyl Gerard Solis
- Richard Jesus Villagomez
- Robin Kyle Alvarez
- Theresa Rose Schweiger
- Vaughn Andrei Mallari
- Victoria Ancheta
- William Nathaniel Ano

12th Grade

- Bernard Angelo Marcelo
- Brandee Hunter
- Brian Youn
- Carmille Perez
- Christian Dean Palattao
- Connie Zhu
- Jieyu Lin
- John Isaac San Nicolas
- Katherine Avendano-Woodruff
- Kevin Kang
- Kyle Attao
- Mikee Mame Mendoza
- Puti'on Palacios-Camacho
- Raymalyn Guanlao
- Seungwoo (Raffy) Lee
- Sinahi Ray Cepeda
- Skyler Poon
- Trinity Cruz
- Victoria Nicole Santos
- Vince Philip Salvador
- Xavier Gatmaitan

HONOR ROLL

Students must have a GPA of 3.66 or above and must not have any behavior grade of U or NI.

1st Grade

- Aycee Rianne Quitugua
- Candize Paige Delos Reyes
- Felix Ryan Tomokane
- Gino Marvin Deleon Guerrero
- Jace Pangelinan
- Jack Joseph Junior Sablan

2nd Grade

- Adam Spencer Dela Cruz
- Aliyani Basa
- Avril Hershey Dimaculangan
- Brayden Luke Repata
- John Damien Sablan
- Joseph Francisco White
- Madden Anthony Deleon Guerrero
- Minjoon (Michale) Jeon
- Oliveeah Julee Kaipat
- Qoheleth Thomas Blas
- Soli Maratita
- Zion James Ulloa

3rd Grade

- Francisco Joseph Cruz
- Franko Ray Tudela
- Heaven Agnes Deleon Guerrero
- Jayda Milan Torres
- Jeremy Terlaje
- Khylee Ysabelle Santos
- Krish Devjani
- Mikayla Guerrero
- Reef Cole Reyes
- Ye Lei (Bruce) Song

4th Grade

- Caydince Raine Masga
- Leighton Tomokane-Tenorio
- Leonmar Jaedon Regalado
- Logan Matsumoto
- Maria Guerrero
- Mia Guerrero
- Miguel Garret Mendoza
- O-Ren Fumiyo Sasamoto
- Payton Thomas Pangelinan

5th Grade

- Aubrey Rae Quitugua
- Francisco Maratita
- Ju Hwan Hyun
- Kimason Cabrera
- Remiegem Melchor

6th Grade

- Aiden Manuel Wesley
- Elle Brie Tudela
- Enzo Umeki Sasamoto
- Ethan Jayce Tomokane
- Frank Anthony Reyes
- Jee In Lee
- Jupri Torres
- Kesiil Camacho
- Matthew Guerrero
- Patrick Guerrero
- Pedro Jose Tomokane
- Yukiko Kiyomi Sasamoto
- Yuliana Lorenza Maratita

7th Grade

- Alexandria Dysangco
- Andrick Poon
- Annieskha Arreza
- Arwen Hannah Bartolata
- Elise Maratita
- Heleyna Frielle Dela Santa
- Joseph Brandon Pangelinan
- Julie Anne Chavez
- Lance Jericho Javier
- Luis Manibusan
- Mya Pangelinan
- Oscar Bien Buenaflor

8th Grade

- Andrei Kaithlyn Chavez
- Aryana Carmen Taimanao
- Breana Ysabel Patawaran
- Chelsy Anne Reyes
- Claire Regina Kautz
- Dylan Santos
- Earl Pete Jacob Lacandazo
- Jada Chang
- Jee Woo Son
- Lyssa Rae Steele
- Maili Peter
- Mia Ysabela Abuan
- Nicole Erin Mariano

9th Grade

- Angel Li
- Arman Kaito Rechucher
- Breanna Sue Mafnas
- Camille Alannah Sablan
- Devin Jordan Propst
- Earle Gabreil San Nicolas
- Gwen Tiffany Gamab
- Ierlyma Nicole Deleon Guerrero
- Jeery Chen
- Juliana Vergara
- Kevin Zheng
- Kriselle Bryana Mitzy Drilon
- Leo Bang
- Leyonne Alfred Tolentino
- Maria Torres
- Mark Jainier Chavez
- Minki Jung
- Natalie Gabrielle Ano
- Palikkun George
- Paul Angelo Santos
- Sanghyeok Lee
- Sophia Camacho
- Tian Si Xu
- Ye Jin Ha

10th Grade

- Aubriana Maria Sablan
- Brissa Hunter
- Carlo Crisdeo Diaz
- Clint Allen Irang
- Da Hyun Shim
- Derek Moritaro Sasamoto
- Erin Frink
- Iver Jude Dimaun
- Kayannie Ilifighar Peter
- Mathew Adrian Sablan
- Moeisha Eleanor Cruz
- Raeka Shereen Lantin
- William Xue

11th Grade

- Christopher Adam Mafnas
- Cory Lee
- Hyunjun Kim
- Jihwan Ryu
- Kiana Lei Propst
- Regina Huerto
- Yu Jeong Son

12th Grade

- Hwan Hee (Shaina) Lee
- Kadie Verlyn Aldan
- Lina Lee
- Maria Ayuyu
- Reuben Christian Tomboc

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

REQUEST FOR ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING SERVICES (RAES)
CUC-RAES-21-008

CONSULTANT FOR INTEGRATED RESOURCE AND OTHER UTILITY PLANNING & OTHER SERVICES

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed proposals for a Consultant (Project Engineer) from qualified Architectural and Engineering (A&E) firms for Professional Services for the development of studies and the ultimate expansion of Power Plant #1 and Design, Build and Construction of a New Power Plant in Lower Base on Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Prospective Proposers for this RAES must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Scope of Work (SOW) of the RAES may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $200.00 (non-refundable) for one RAES package set.

One (1) Non-Priced Proposal & One (1) Priced Proposal marked "CUC-RAES-21-008, CONSULTANT FOR INTEGRATED RESOURCE AND OTHER UTILITY PLANNING & OTHER SERVICES" must be submitted via email to Marcela Tenorio, CUC Senior, Purchasing Technician via email address marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on February 11, 2021. Late submissions and conditional proposals will not be considered.**

All proposers are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the proposers due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Consultant's preparation of a proposal under the contract. The RAES does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the statement of qualifications under this request, or to procure or contract for services. Consultants are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This RAES and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

The selection of an A&E firm for the award of a contract will be by a committee appointed by the CUC Executive Director for this purpose, which will evaluate responses to this solicitation. Selection shall be made in accordance with CUC Procurement Regulations §50-50-305 regarding Architectural and Engineering Services. Discussions shall be conducted with at least 3 of the responding firms (or less if fewer than five firms respond) regarding the contract requirements and technical approach and selection made therefrom. Based on the scoring criteria outlined herein, only the three most highly qualified firms shall be invited to discuss further the firm's qualifications and project approach outlined in the scope of work.

All questions or request for clarification regarding this project will be entertained only for pre-registered prospective proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on January 22, 2021** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email–manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Marcela Tenorio, CUC Purchasing Technician, Senior–via email marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and waive any imperfection in the proposal in the best interest of the government. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

GARY CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

REQUEST FOR ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING SERVICES
CUC-RAES-21-013

A&E Design Services for the Lower Miha Sewerline Replacement (S19-068)

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from qualified Architectural and Engineering (A&E) firms for the Design Services of the Lower Miha Homestead Sewerline Replacement in Garapan, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

This project is funded by a grant from the United States of Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of the approval for project award from USEPA.

Prospective Proposers for this project must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The RAES package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $100.00 for one package set.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies of the Proposal must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-RAES-21-013, A&E Design Services for Lower Miha Sewerline Replacement"**, to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on February 12, 2021. Late submissions and conditional proposals will not be considered.**

Discussions may be conducted with responsible proposers who submit proposal determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. All proposers shall be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity for discussion. During discussions, there will be no disclosure of any information derived from the proposal submitted by competing proposers.

All proposers are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the proposers due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Consultant's preparation of a proposal under the contract. The RAES does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the statement of qualifications under this request, or to procure or contract for services. Consultants are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This RAES and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on January 22, 2021** to Mr. Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email – manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Mr. Larry Manacop, CUC Water/Wastewater, Acting Chief Engineer – via email larry.manacop@cucgov.org; Dennis Formalejo, Water/Wastewater Engineer – via email dennis.formalejo@cucgov.org and Ms. Marcela Tenorio, Administrative Technician Senior – via email marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and waive any imperfection in the proposal in the best interest of the government. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

FOR VACCINATED PASSENGERS

'No change in protocols'

There won't be any changes in travel-related protocols for passengers who have been vaccinated and are arriving in the CNMI, according to Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. chief executive officer Esther Muña.

Speaking at the first Health and Welfare Committee meeting last Friday at the House of Representatives' chamber on Capital Hill, Muña said they have to be careful because there's a concern about the new COVID-19 variant.

"You may have been vaccinated and it protects you definitely, but it doesn't protect the community, so we need to make sure that our protocols are at this time stay the same," said Muña.

As of Jan. 31, 6,487 residents on Saipan have gotten their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. According to Muña, Phase 1B is set to reopen this coming weekend.

Muña added that preregistration is critical in the vaccination process because there are many steps that take place before someone gets inoculated with either the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine or the Moderna vaccine.

Muña assured the committee that since the COVID-19 pandemic began, the hospital was the first to shift its operations even when they weren't adequately funded. She told the committee that, with its help, she is confident that the hospital will improve more.

Committee chair Rep. Tina Sablan (D-Saipan) said at the meeting that the committee has a role to play to ensure that funds are monitored closely and that benefits reach those who need them.

"This committee plays an important role in working with CHCC, the administration and the medical referral office as well as other policy experts to conduct a long-overdue review of this program and identify areas where services could be improved or offered on island or through telemedicine, and we're seeing it," said Sablan.

Sablan acknowledges that the CNMI has the highest rates of chronic disease and obesity in the nation, and the cost of a population in poor health simply cannot be underestimated. She added that the committee will support increased investments for health care, and especially for preventive care through moderate increases in alcohol and tobacco taxes, and reasonable tax on sugar-sweetened beverages. ***(Justine Nauta)***

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp
Website: http://www.nmhcgov.net

EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY OF COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT FUNDS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2021

THIS ADVERTISEMENT IS PAID FOR BY NMHC WITH CPD FUNDS.

The Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, **through the** Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) is announcing the availability of an **estimated** $1,323,784.00 in Community Planning and Development (CPD) funds available from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. NMHC anticipates receiving an estimated amount of $867,556.00 in Community Development Block Grants (CDBG); $386,617.00 in Home Investment Partnerships (HOME); and $69,611.00 in Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds for Program Year (PY) 2021.

The CDBG funds, authorized under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, may be used for a wide range of community development activities to revitalize neighborhoods, provide affordable housing, expand economic opportunities, and improve community facilities and services. However, use of these funds must meet at least one of the national objectives which include: 1) to benefit low and moderate-income families; 2) to eliminate slum or blight conditions; or 3) to meet other urgent community development needs.

The CDBG program requires a grant recipient to certify that it will minimize displacement of persons as a result of activities assisted with CDBG funds. The CNMI government does not plan on undertaking any activity which will cause displacement of person. In the event of any unforeseen displacement resulting from any CDBG funded activity, the CNMI government will comply with the requirements of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, its implementing regulation and applicable local law.

HOME funds may be used to create affordable housing through financing assistance, site acquisition or improvement, and rehabilitating existing residential dwellings as well as providing funds for new construction or purchase of a single-family residential dwelling. Use of HOME funds must benefit low-income families.

ESG funds may be used to rehabilitate or convert to buildings into homeless shelters and for shelter operating expenses, supportive services and homeless prevention **and rapid re-housing** activities. Use of ESG funds must benefit the homeless.

You may access the CPD applications on the NMHC website at www.nmhcgov.net by selecting the "Public Notice/Announcement" menu tab, beginning February 02, 2021.

Applications must be submitted to the NMHC Offices in Garapan, Saipan (Saipan Applicants); NMC Campus, Building A (Tinian Applicants); and Songsong Village, Rota (Rota Applicants) by ***April 30, 2021, no later than 4:30 p.m. Applications submitted after April 30 2021, will not be accepted.***

Additional inquiries, concerning the CPD program, may be directed to Ms. Zenie P. Mafnas, Deputy Corporate Director or Ms. Tricia Tenorio, Planner at 234-6866 or 234-9447.

/s/
Jesse S. Palacios
Corporate Director

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-21-018

RELOCATION OF UTILITIES AT ROAD (A-F) AND ROUTE 205/206 TINIAN

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the Relocation of Utilities at Road A-F and Route 205/206 in Tinian, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The project consists, in general relocation of gate valves, water meters, waterlines, fire hydrant assembly and other related work. The work shall be done in accordance with the Project Plans and Specifications and without disruption to the daily operation of the water system.

This project is funded by a grant from the United States Department of Defense (USDOD). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of the approval for project award from USDOD.

CUC requires the Project to be completed in **180 calendar days** from date of award of contract.

Prospective Bidders for this IFB must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $200.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference is scheduled on **February 2, 2021 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-IFB-21-018, *Relocation of Utilities at Road A-F and Route 205/206 Tinian*"**, to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on February 25, 2021**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement the form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. **Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.**

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

A Bid Guarantee of not less than fifteen (15%) of the total bid price shall accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General.

A Payment Bond of one hundred (100%) percent and a Performance Bond of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). **Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.**

All bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All questions or request for clarification regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on February 09, 2021** to Mr. Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email – manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Mr. Joel Puyat, CUC Water/Wastewater Engineer – via email joel.puyat@cucgov.org and Marcela Tenorio, Procurement & Supply, Administrative Technician, Senior – via email marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any non-material imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Officer

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: http://www.nmhcgov.net
Tel Nos. 670-234-6866/234-9447; Fax No: 670-234-9021

EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

For Public Comment
February 2, 2021
Substantial Amendment to the Five Year Consolidated Plan (2015-2019) and Program Year 2019 Annual Action Plan

The Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) announces the availability for public review and comment, the Substantial Amendment to the Five-Year Consolidated Plan (2015 – 2019) / Annual Action Plan Program Year 2019.

NMHC's Citizen Participation Plan has triggered the need for a substantial amendment to both the Five-Year Consolidated Plan (2015- 2019) and the Annual Action Plan for Program Year 2019. The CNMI is seeking the public's comments to amend both the Five-Year Consolidated Plan (2015-2019) and the Annual Action Plan for the Program Year 2019 to include additional Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) (3rd allocation) made possible through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act which will address the COVID19 pandemic in the CNMI. CDBG-COVID (third allocation) funds intended use is to administer a food pantry program for qualified families in the CNMI. The program will be sub-granted to the following non-profit organizations: 1) Karidat Social Services and 2) Center for Living Independently in the CNMI

Program	Allocation	Project Description
CDBG-COVID (third allocation)	$545,858.00	Total Allocation Budget: 1) ***Karidat Social Services***- $405,268.50 for project delivery costs and planning and administrative costs 2) ***Center for Living Independently in the CNMI***- $135,089.50 for project delivery costs and planning and administrative costs 3) **Northern Marianas Housing Corporation**- $5,500.00 for planning and administrative costs

The Substantial Amendment to the Five-Year Consolidated Plan (2015 – 2019)/Annual Action Plan Program Year 2019 will be made available for review on the NMHC website beginning Tuesday, February 2, 2021. In addition, due to protocols to mitigate the spread of CoVid19, NMHC will be hosting virtual hearings through the following online forums on Monday, February 8, 2021:

1) Social Media- FB Live
2) Zoom Video and Teleconferencing
3) NMHC Website

Details regarding the virtual hearings can be found at NMHC's website at www.nmhcgov.net

The general public will be given the opportunity to provide comments at the virtual hearings. All written comments should be submitted through the NMHC website at www.nmhcgov.net or at the Drop Box located at the NMHC Office Building in Garapan, Saipan, no later than 4:30 p.m., Wednesday, February 10, 2021. For further information, please contact Zenie Mafnas, Deputy Corporate Director, at 670-285-2146.

/s/ Jesse. S. Palacios
Corporate Director

NMHC will make necessary arrangements for persons with disabilities. If you should require any special accommodations, please contact the Deputy Corporate Director 670-285-2146.

This advertisement is paid with HUD CPD Funds.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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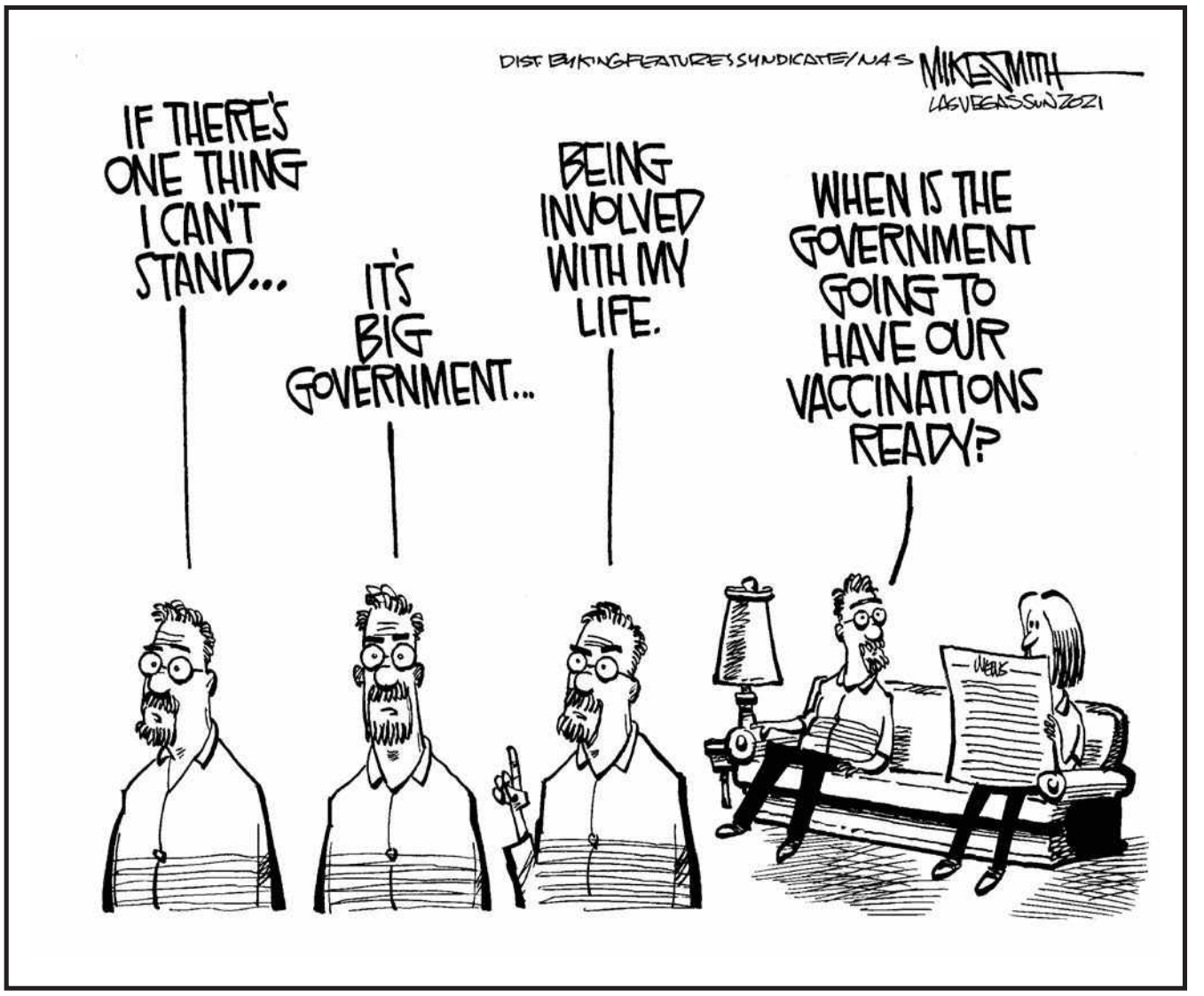
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IF THERE'S ONE THING I CAN'T STAND...
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BEING INVOLVED WITH MY LIFE.
WHEN IS THE GOVERNMENT GOING TO HAVE OUR VACCINATIONS READY?
WEEKS

EDITORIAL

Marjorie Taylor Greene: A terrorist in Congress' midst

Marjorie Taylor Greene. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

It may be arguable whether Marjorie Taylor Greene is clinically paranoid or simply a despicably wicked person, but what is certain is that she is a member of Congress, and that is intolerable.

She is especially odious to Broward County for mocking the victims of the 2018 massacre at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. Yet even that horrible conduct is not the worst of her.

Recently discovered Facebook posts suggest that she is a domestic terrorist. The House of Representatives should investigate that and seriously consider expelling her. And it should start by kicking her off the education committee, to which the Republican leadership has appointed her, a move that serves as mockery to the dead of Parkland.

Congress has no obligation to tolerate someone who endorsed calls for a "bullet to the head" of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, for hanging former President Barack Obama and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, and for the execution of FBI agents suspected of working against ex-president Donald Trump.

That goes beyond protected speech. It is incitement to assassination. As the nation saw at the Capitol on Jan. 6, there is a far-right element in America that is primed for violence, waiting only for agitators to light their fuses.

See MARJORIE on Next Page

I called Arizona for Biden on Fox News. Here's what I learned

By CHRIS STIREWALT
Los Angeles Times

Chris Stirewalt is the former politics editor for the Fox News Channel and the author of Every Man a King: A Short, Colorful History of American Populists.

The *New York Evening Express* was no great shakes as a newspaper. But in 1886, when *The New York Times* ran the obituary of one of the *Express*' former owners, Erastus Brooks, it had to give credit where it was due. "Its make-up was typographically an abomination, but it always had the news," the *Times* declared grudgingly of its rival.

Once, in order to beat his competitors with the results of an important state election in the early 1840s, Brooks hired out a stateroom on a Hudson River steamboat and installed a printing press.

By the time the competition's reporters returned to New York City from Albany to file their stories, Brooks already had the finished product in hand.

The American news business is chockablock with the stories of heroic (and sometimes underhanded) efforts to beat the competition and get the news to an information-starved public.

In my career as a political analyst and, until my firing in January, an election forecaster on the decision desk at Fox News, I have always been with Brooks. I wanted to steam downriver as fast as I could to be first with the news to beat the competition and serve my audience.

That's why I was proud of our being first to project that Joe Biden would win Arizona, and very happy to defend that call in the face of a public backlash egged on by former President Donald Trump. Being right and beating the competition is no act of heroism; it's just meeting the job description of the work I love. But what happens now that there are almost no physical limits on the getting and giving of the news?

Being first with the account or images of major events is a thing of scant value now. What one outlet has, every outlet will have, usually within seconds. Indeed, being first can prove to be a commercial disadvantage.

Having worked in cable news for more than a decade after a wonderfully misspent youth in newspapers, I can tell you the result: a nation of news consumers both overfed and malnourished. Americans gorge themselves daily on empty informational calories, indulging their sugar fixes of self-affirming half-truths and even outright lies.

Can anyone really be surprised that the problem has gotten worse in the last few years?

Bias in the coverage of politics and government is nothing new. Old Erastus Brooks himself was an ardent Whig and frequent candidate for office. What is still relatively new is a marketplace that offers penalties for reporting the news but lots of rewards for indulging a consumer's worst cravings. Cable news producers work in a world of 15-minute increments in which their superiors can track even tiny changes in viewership.

Ratings, combined with scads of market research, tell them what keeps viewers entranced and what makes them pick up their remotes. It's no different from the pressure online outlets face to serve up items that will generate clicks and steer consumers ever deeper into the maw of "you might be interested in" content.

Whatever the platform, the competitive advantage belongs to those who can best habituate consumers, which in the stunted, data-obsessed thinking of our time, means avoiding at almost any cost impinging on the reality so painstakingly built around them. As outlets have increasingly prioritized habituation over information, consumers have unsurprisingly become ever more sensitive to any interruption of their daily diet.

The rebellion on the populist right against the results of the 2020 election was partly a cynical, knowing effort by political operators and their hype men in the media to steal an election or at least get rich trying. But it was also the tragic consequence of the informational malnourishment so badly afflicting the nation.

When I defended the call for Biden in the Arizona election, I became a target of murderous rage from consumers who were furious at not having their views confirmed.

See ARIZONA on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

School reopenings are Biden's first big test

By MICHAEL R. BLOOMBERG
Bloomberg Opinion

Michael R. Bloomberg is the founder and majority owner of Bloomberg LP, the parent company of Bloomberg News*, and served as mayor of New York City from 2002 to 2013.*

America's schoolchildren and teachers have just gotten some very good news from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. After reviewing data from multiple studies in the U.S. and abroad, the agency has concluded that in-person schooling poses very little risk of coronavirus transmission as long as basic safety precautions are followed. That should send a clear message to governors, mayors and teachers union leaders: It's time to open the schools.

In addition to the terrible toll COVID-19 has taken on the nation's health, it's been a calamity for American education. Only about 15% of school districts offered full-time in-person classes last fall. For students and parents elsewhere, the pandemic has meant navigating novel and often dubious remote-learning software. Any parent of a young child can attest that virtual instruction typically falls somewhere between subpar and hopeless.

The results have been alarming but not surprising. Early research suggests sharply reduced learning gains; widening racial disparities in achievement; and an eruption of anxiety, loneliness, depression and other mental health afflictions among students isolated from their peers and stuck at home. Some districts have seen a rash of suicides. Education analysts warn that the long-term consequences—for disadvantaged kids, for racial equity, even for America's global competitiveness—could be disastrous.

In short, getting kids back into classrooms should be a national priority. More local leaders are recognizing that, but in some cases, districts have tried to reopen, only to be stymied by unions. In Chicago—which has one of the country's largest school systems, and where more than 75% of students are economically disadvantaged—the union has simply defied the city's reopening plans. In Montclair, New Jersey, the local union is blocking even two-day-a-week instruction. In Fairfax County, Virginia, the union got teachers moved to the front of the line for vaccines—and then decided that in-class instruction shouldn't resume until vaccinations were ready for students. No vaccines are currently authorized for those under age 16.

Educators are understandably hesitant to return to work, and exceptions should be made for those in high-risk populations. But for the vast majority, the moment has come to return—and many are eager to do so.

To help more districts reopen, President Joe Biden should reassure union leaders that he takes teacher safety seriously. But he also needs to apply some pressure to states and cities. Funding from previous relief bills—more than $67 billion, all told—has helped schools to pay for testing, protective gear, improved ventilation, added staff and more. Biden is offering an additional $130 billion, and has rightly pledged sweeping federal support for schools that need it. But he should be clear that this is a two-way street. The government will do everything it can to ensure classrooms are safe; in return, school districts must prioritize getting kids back at their desks.

Biden should also be willing to use the bully pulpit. His public support for reopening without delay can help give state and local officials, particularly his fellow Democrats, the kind of political capital they need to overcome opposition—and to then go further, by extending the school year into the summer and thinking more creatively about how to make up for lost time. He should urge labor leaders publicly and privately to get on board as well. His statement on Monday about the Chicago dispute—"The teachers I know, they want to work"—hit the right note. If such efforts fail, he should consider working with Congress to condition future aid on whether districts in low-risk areas are willing to open their doors.

The pandemic has demanded sacrifices from everyone. Hospital employees and first responders, who work in environments that are far more dangerous than classrooms (and who are also often represented by unions), as well as transportation workers and other public employees, have steadfastly done their jobs throughout this crisis, honoring their responsibility to their communities—and making the nation proud. Children—and all of America—need teachers to join them.

ARIZONA

From Page 8

Having been cosseted by self-validating coverage for so long, many Americans now consider any news that might suggest that they are in error or that their side has been defeated as an attack on them personally. The lie that Trump won the 2020 election wasn't nearly as much aimed at the opposing party as it was at the news outlets that stated the obvious, incontrovertible fact.

While there is still a lucrative market for a balanced offering of news and opinion at high-end outlets, much of the mainstream is increasingly bent toward flattery and fluff. Most stories are morally complicated and don't have white hats and black hats. Defeats have many causes and victories are never complete. Reporting these stories requires skill and dispassion. But hearing them requires something of consumers, too: Enough humility to be open to learning something new.

I remain confident that the current depredations of the digital revolution will pass, just as those of the telegraph, radio and broadcast television did. Americans grew into those media and providers learned to meet the demands of a more sophisticated marketplace. That's the work that I've always aimed to do and hope to be part of for many years to come.

What tugs at my mind after seeing a mob of enthusiastic ignoramuses sack the Capitol, though, is whether that sophistication will come quickly enough when outlets have the means to cater to every unhealthy craving of their consumers.

MARJORIE

From Page 8

Greene, a Republican freshman from northwest Georgia, was known as an enthusiastic peddler of the fantastic QAnon conspiracy tale before she won a crowded primary and runoff last year. Quite sensibly, the top GOP House leaders had opposed her candidacy.

What has been learned about her since the election gives them the duty to drum her out of the Republican Party and, if possible, out of Congress.

To "like" something on Facebook is to agree with it, absent any expression to the contrary. In posts that CNN unearthed this week. Greene liked a comment that said "a bullet to the head would be quicker" than ending Pelosi's speakership by political means.

To another post about hanging Obama and Clinton, Greene replied, "Stage is being set. Players are being put in place. We must be patient. This must be done perfectly or liberal judges would let them off."

She was describing nothing less than a criminal conspiracy.

Of special concern locally are her vile remarks about the 17 Parkland murders. In posts newly unearthed from that year and the next, Greene spread the baseless claim that the victims and parents were "crisis actors" and that the attack was staged as a plot to pass gun control laws.

What has also turned up is a video showing Greene stalking David Hogg, a survivor of the massacre, on a street near the U.S. Capitol, where he and other students had been lobbying members of Congress for sensible gun control. Greene had been shadowing and harassing them. Not yet in office, she was a right-wing commentator.

The video, apparently made by an ally of Greene, captures a 44-year-old woman screaming at a man young enough to be her son as he displays the stoic maturity to ignore the virago at his heels.

Appropriately, Hogg has written on Twitter to House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., to ask that Greene serve on no committees. Instead, Republicans acquiesced to her outrageous demand to be placed on the education committee, a perch from which they should strip her immediately.

"In that video," Hogg wrote, "you see a group of people most of whom are 18 or 19 acting calm cool and collected—what you don't see are the sleepless nights, the flashbacks, the hyper vigilance and deep pitch black numbness so many of us feel living in a society where we are told our friends dying doesn't matter."

Other Parkland survivors and their families have called for an apology from Greene and for her resignation. Reps. Ted Deutch and Debbie Wasserman Schultz have denounced her for her Parkland propaganda, and on Twitter, Deutch has called for her expulsion from Congress. Deutch, it should be noted, chairs the House Ethics Committee, which would be instrumental in any effort to investigate, reprimand, censure or expel a member.

Greene has made the same baseless claims about the mass shooting in Las Vegas. Significantly, she peppers her harangues with allegations, heard in the confrontation with Hogg, that the billionaire philanthropist George Soros is behind the youthful gun control advocates. Hogg says he hasn't received a dime from Soros.

A fixation with Soros is a familiar anti-Semitic trope on the far right.

Greene hasn't denied the authenticity of her Facebook posts, which speak for themselves, but she insinuated that someone else wrote them.

On Twitter, she wrote that she had "teams of people manage my pages."

Really? She should have to verify that statement under oath, and then name the people.

At a town meeting in her district Wednesday, she refused to answer a television reporter's questions about her posts. Her staff had a sheriff's deputy threaten to arrest the reporter and her crew.

The least that can be done to Greene is to deny her any committee roles, as the GOP did to former Rep. Steve King, R-Iowa, in 2019 when his racism became too overt to ignore any longer. He lost a primary last year.

Greene should also be unwelcome in the GOP caucus.

The Constitution allows the Congress to expel a member by a two-thirds vote of the House or Senate, but there is doubt whether the Supreme Court would approve expulsion for grounds that occurred before Greene was elected. Given that only 10 House Republicans supported the Trump impeachment, it is doubtful that enough would vote for Greene's expulsion, or for any discipline. But they should all be made to go on the record.

In all its history, the House has expelled only five members, three of whom were ousted for supporting the Confederacy. There have been 23 censures and 11 reprimands, internal actions that the Supreme Court would not likely touch. Among the censures: Rep. Robert L.F. Sikes, D-Fla., in 1976 for egregious conflicts of interest. One of the most recent reprimands was of Rep. Joe Wilson, R-S.C., in 2009, for shouting "You lie!" at Obama during his State of the Union address.

Greene's district, which includes the carpet-manufacturing city of Dalton, is 27% more Republican than the national average, according to the Cook Political Report. Of the $2.3 million she raised to run, nearly $1 million was self-financed, according to OpenSecrets.org. She won the Republican runoff with 57% of the vote and the general election with nearly 75% after her Democratic opponent withdrew too late to be removed from the ballot.

It is unrealistic to expect someone like Greene to apologize to the Parkland families or to anyone else, but it can be hoped that her district will make amends. Surely those Georgia Republicans can do better by their party and by the nation.

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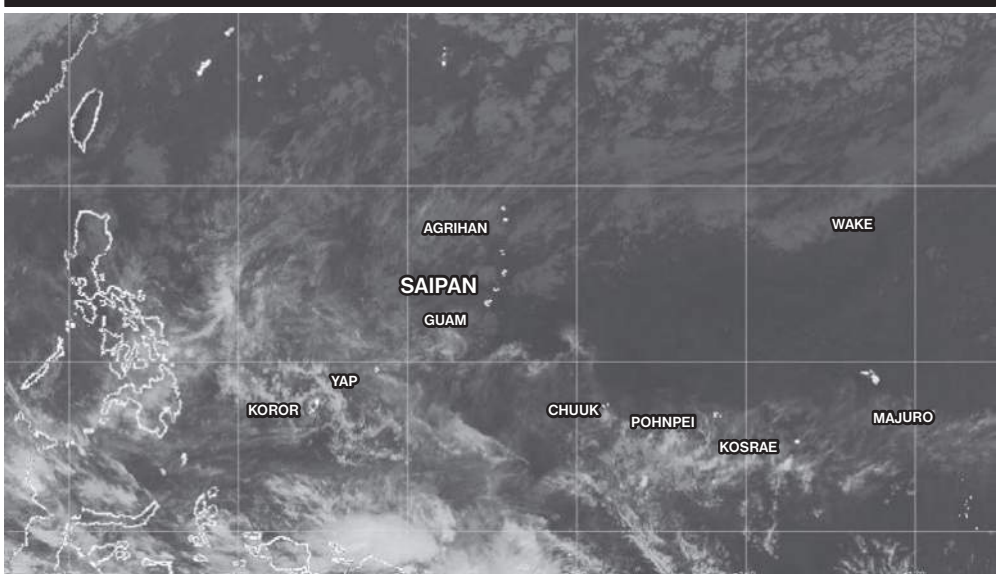
The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Mostly cloudy and breezy with scattered showers. East winds 20 to 25 mph.	Mostly cloudy and breezy with scattered showers. East winds 20 to 25 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated light showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated light showers.	Mostly cloudy and breezy with scattered showers.
86° 76°	86° 76°	87° 77°	87° 77°	86° 76°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 12:53 PM, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2021

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

The Chuuk forecast was updated for today and tonight for stronger winds noted in the midday scatterometer pass. More notably, winds of 20-25 kt will make for hazardous conditions on the waters for boaters. Showers have largely pushed well to the south of the Chuuk lagoon with the surge of northeasterly trades.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Mostly Cloudy	83° / 76°
Palau	Thunderstorm	85° / 77°
Yap	Thunderstorm	84° / 78°
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	86° / 80°
Pohnpei	Showers	84° / 80°
Kosrae	Showers	84° / 80°
Majuro	Showers	85° / 79°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:45 AM	6:15 PM
Wednesday	6:45 AM	6:16 PM
Thursday	6:45 AM	6:16 PM
Friday	6:45 AM	6:16 PM
Saturday	6:44 AM	6:17 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	10:03 AM	10:29 PM
Wednesday	-	10:45 AM	11:25 PM
Thursday	-	11:28 AM	-
Friday	12:23 AM	12:14 PM	-
Saturday	1:22 AM	1:03 PM	-

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	75° / 59°
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	45° / 27°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	68° / 64°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	79° / 65°
London	Showers	48° / 39°
Los Angeles	Cloudy	66° / 54°
Manila	Partly Cloudy	86° / 73°
Melbourne	Sunny	81° / 55°
Miami	Partly Cloudy	78° / 68°
New York	Mostly Sunny	40° / 25°
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	52° / 37°
Paris	Showers	57° / 46°
Pusan	Partly Cloudy	48° / 30°
Rome	Cloudy	61° / 54°
Salem	Partly Cloudy	69° / 47°
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	42° / 22°
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	43° / 25°
Tokyo	Sunny	55° / 36°
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	44° / 29°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
4:43 AM	Low Tide	-0.15
11:21 AM	High Tide	1.81
5:36 PM	Low Tide	0.63
10:49 PM	High Tide	1.55

STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

- Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.
- Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.
- Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.
- Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.
- Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.
- Create a household plan of action, https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklisthousehold-ready.html
- Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

Continue good hand hygiene

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic

- Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:
- ❑ Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.
- ❑ Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- ❑ Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- ❑ Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561 These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mpand, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Rumor control

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

Source: Office of the Governor

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF FEBRUARY 1, 2021

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	6:55am	7:35am	1, 6
UA117	7:00am	7:40am	4

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	6:55am	9:50pm	1 via Guam

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

UA183	8:00pm	9:50pm	1, 3, 5

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	5:10am	5:51am	1, 6
UA174	5:15am	5:56am	4

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA184/174	10:55pm	5:56am+1	3 via Guam
UA184/174	10:40pm	5:51am+1	5 via Guam

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

UA184	10:40pm	4:30am+1	5
UA184	10:55pm	4:40am+1	1, 3

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 9, 2021

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30AM	9:00AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri
1302	11:00AM	11:30AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sat
1303	3:30PM	4:00PM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sun

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30AM	10:00AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri
3102	12:00AM	12:30AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sat
3103	4:30PM	5:00PM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sun

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Temporarily Unavailable

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00	7:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1205	11:00	11:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1206	12:00	12:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1207	13:00	13:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily
1212	17:00	17:15	Temporarily Unavailable

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2101	7:30	7:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2105	11:30	11:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2106	12:30	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2107	13:30	13:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily
2112	18:30	18:45	Temporarily Unavailable

SCC Business Person of the Year Gala

PHOTOS By IVA MAURIN

Saipan Chamber of Commerce Business Person of the Year Esther Muña poses with the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. team and the previous Business Person of the Year awardees at the gala held Saturday at the Saipan World Resort Royal Taga Hall in Susupe.

Associate Judge Kenneth L. Govendo and his wife, Domie, are joined at the table by 2005 Saipan Chamber of Commerce Business Person of the Year awardee Dave Sablan Sr., Fr. Michael Linden, Vincent Torres, and Pacific Rim president Keith Stewart at the gala last Saturday at the Saipan World Resort Royal Taga Hall in Susupe.

Kevin and Kate Razon, representing EatsEasy co-founder Clint Albert, receive the Startup of the Year award from Saipan Chamber of Commerce executive director Maxine Laszlo at the gala held Saturday at the Saipan World Resort Royal Taga Hall in Susupe.

Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. chief executive officer Esther Muña receives a hug from 2019 Business Person of the Year Gloria Cavanagh, after being announced as the 2020 Saipan Chamber of Commerce's Business Person of the Year at a gala last Saturday at the Saipan World Resort Royal Taga Hall in Susupe.

Triple J Enterprises, Inc. vice president Mike Sablan led his team in accepting the Saipan Chamber Member of the Year at the gala last Saturday at the Saipan World Resort Royal Taga Hall in Susupe.

Saipan Chamber of Commerce executive director Maxine Laszlo hands over a wooden gavel to former board president Velma Ann Palacios as a token of gratitude, at the gala held Saturday at the Saipan World Resort Royal Taga Hall in Susupe.

Saipan Cares for Animals director Beth Pliscou receives the Nonprofit of the Year award from Saipan Chamber of Commerce executive director Maxine Laszlo at the gala last Saturday at the Saipan World Resort Royal Taga Hall in Susupe.

Saipan Young Professional of the Year awardee Jacqueline P. Che, interim senior director for accountability, research, and evaluation at the CNMI Public School System, poses with Saipan Chamber of Commerce executive director Maxine Laszlo at the gala last Saturday at the Saipan World Resort Royal Taga Hall in Susupe.

Naked Fish Bar & Grill's Joe Guerrero, Eleanor Cabrera, and Hannah Blanco receive the Small Business of the Year award from Saipan Chamber of Commerce executive director Maxine Laszlo at the gala held Saturday at the Saipan World Resort Royal Taga Hall in Susupe.

Saipan Chamber of Commerce officers and members enjoy a full night of mask-a-rade fun at the gala held Saturday at the Saipan World Resort Royal Taga Hall in Susupe.

TanHoldings executives and guests pose for a picture at the gala held Saturday at the Saipan World Resort Royal Taga Hall in Susupe.

Business

Docomo Pacific donates Aura Air units to CHCC

Docomo Pacific, regional leader in innovation, telecommunications, and entertainment, has donated three Aura Air units to the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.

Since the launch of its partnership with Aura Air in November 2020, Docomo Pacific remains committed to providing a healthier environment in the Marianas. Aura Air smart filters have been installed at the Guam Memorial Hospital, restaurants, homes, and we're excited to add the CHCC to the list. Providing clean air is an extra layer of protection and restores confidence knowing you can trust the air you are breathing.

"We remain committed to supporting these efforts for the betterment of our people, but most importantly the continuance of normalcy and a healthy and safe CNMI. We are fortunate to provide our resources as a responsible corporate citizen," said Docomo Pacific CNMI general manager Pauline Johnson.

"The CHCC is very grateful for the Aura Air donated by DOCOMO PACIFIC. Since the height of the COVID-19 Pandemic, everyone has been making adjustments and modifications towards operations flow, equipment and even policies to protect the CNMI community. As a result, access to new equipment has become more available to best compliment the recommended adjustments and modifications like air purification and disinfection. This donation of the Aura Air will be an excellent addition to efforts in safeguarding the health and safety of the CNMI community at CHCC. *Si Yu'us Ma'ase* Docomo Pacific! We are grateful and appreciative of your continuous support toward the health and wellbeing of the CNMI," said CHCC chief executive officer Esther Muña.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From left, Conrad Sablan, retail manager, Docomo Pacific; Pauline Johnson, CNMI general manager, Docomo Pacific; Esther Muña, chief executive officer, CHCC; Halina Palacios, Corporate Quality & Performance Management manager, CHCC; and Brent Deleon Guerrero, CNMI brand owner, Docomo Pacific.

An all-in-one indoor air purification and quality intelligence system, Aura filters 99.9% of COVID-19 particles in the air and disinfects indoor air through a unique Four-stage purification process while vigilantly monitoring its quality in real-time. When hazards are detected, Aura alerts you immediately, providing crucial intelligence as to the origin of the problem, solutions of how to rectify it, and alarms if immediate action or evacuation is required. While keeping you informed of the conditions inside your home or business, Aura also monitors outdoor air quality, providing you a holistic picture of today and what's to come tomorrow.

Aura Air units are available now at all DOCOMO PACIFIC retail locations.

For more information, please visit our website at www.docomopacific.com or call us at 688-CARE (Guam)/488-CARE (CNMI).***(PR)***

Buoyed by Keystone XL, pipeline opponents want Biden to act

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)— After President Joe Biden revoked Keystone XL's presidential permit and shut down construction of the long-disputed pipeline that was to carry oil from Canada to Texas, opponents of other pipelines hoped the projects they've been fighting would be next.

The Biden administration hasn't specified what action it might take on other pipelines, but industry experts doubt there will be swift changes like the one that stopped Keystone. They say the Keystone XL move on Biden's first day fulfilled a campaign promise and was symbolic for a president who has made climate change a national security priority and has called for a dramatic increase in cost-competitive renewable and clean-burning energy.

"I think generally we can expect more rigorous environmental reviews, more scrutiny and so forth. But I would be very surprised if Biden were to take any action of the executive order type," said Ben Cowan, an environmental law attorney who advises clients on permitting for pipelines and other energy projects.

A look at some other high-profile pipeline projects and what actions Biden might take:

DAKOTA ACCESS

Opponents of the Dakota Access pipeline, which carries oil from North Dakota to a shipping point in Illinois, want Biden's U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to shut it down.

A federal appeals court ruled last week that the project must undergo a more thorough environmental review, known as an environmental impact statement, but it declined to shut the line down while the review is completed.

Texas-based pipeline owner Energy Transfer maintains the line is safe. But pipeline opponents say the ruling means it is operating with an invalid permit.

The Army Corps faces a Feb. 10 hearing where it must tell a federal judge how it expects to proceed without a permit granting easement for the 1,172-mile (1,886 kilometer) pipeline to cross beneath Lake Oahe, along the Missouri River. The Standing Rock Sioux, who draw water from the river, have said they fear the line will someday fail and pollute the water and land.

"This pipeline doesn't have a permit and it's operating in violation of law and the court expects the Corps to do something about it," said Jan Hasselman, an attorney for the tribe. He said the Corps could halt the pipeline's operations until the environmental impact statement is completed.

The White House said in a statement it was reviewing the Dakota Access decision and is committed to complying with all legal obligations, including consulting with tribal nations before making any decision that would affect tribes or their land.

The Army Corps didn't respond to a message.

ENBRIDGE LINE 3

Opponents of the Line 3 replacement pipeline in Minnesota are stepping up pressure on Biden. More than 100,000 people have signed a petition — promoted by Democratic U.S. Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York – calling on Biden to revoke a water permit. Opponents also marched Friday to the Corps' St. Paul office.

Andy Pearson, the Midwest tar sands coordinator for the climate advocacy group MN350, said Line 3 is similar to Keystone XL in its makeup — it carries tar sands oil from Canada — but the federal permitting issues are similar to what Dakota Access faces.

Line 3 starts in Alberta and clips a corner of North Dakota before crossing northern Minnesota en route to Enbridge's terminal in Superior, Wisconsin. The 337-mile (542.35-kilometer) line in Minnesota is the last step in replacing a deteriorating pipeline built in the 1960s. The replacement will follow a different route in some places and carry more oil.

Pearson and others said revocation of Line 3's presidential permit at the U.S.-Canada border is unlikely because the line is already in place there. Instead, opponents are targeting the line's federal water permit, saying in a lawsuit that the Corps failed to address environmental issues or conduct a federal environmental impact statement when the permit was granted.

Pearson said Biden should put the pipeline on hold and make sure a thorough environmental review is done.

Enbridge Energy said Biden's decision on Keystone will have no impact on Line 3 or a similar Line 5 project in Michigan. Unlike the Keystone project, lines 3 and 5 are currently operating, the company said, and the Line 3 replacement was ordered by a consent decree during Obama's administration.

Fight The Man: What GameStop's surge says about online mobs

It's a fable for our times: Small-time investors band together to take down greedy Wall Street hedge funds using the stock of a troubled video-game store.

But the revolt of online stock-traders suggests much more. The internet is shifting society's balance of power in unanticipated ways. And the same tools that empower the little guy—allowing people to organize quickly and seemingly out of nowhere, troll powerful institutions and unleash chaos—can also give rise to extremist mobs waging harassment campaigns or the Jan. 6 riot at the Capitol.

In the world of pseudonymous internet message boards, pranks-gone-wild and logic turned upside down amid a global pandemic, revolts come in all shapes, sizes and aims. Last week they gave us the Great GameStop Stock Uprising. Who knows what this week will bring.

One thing for sure: we'll be seeing more of it. More and more of us have learned to game the system, whether for a noble cause or, as they say, "for the lulz." If a meme of Bernie Sanders in mittens can distract us amid a presidential inauguration and a Reddit message board can send Wall Street big shots running in panic, perhaps some good can come out of this, too. Right?

"The internet can democratize access, upsetting power dynamics between the people and traditional institutions," tweeted Tiffany C. Li, a law professor and tech attorney focusing on privacy and technology platform governance.

With GameStop, she added in an interview Friday, the goal was to upset the interests of a few large hedge funds.

"But in other places the goal can be more nefarious. Online spaces are being used to radicalize people toward extremism, to plan hate crimes and attacks," she said. "The internet isn't really the villain or the hero."

Jason Wilkinson had dabbled in stocks but took a deeper dive into the Reddit forum WallStreetBets after losing his job at a tech company in the pandemic. The 30-year-old New York City resident started trading between other part-time jobs doing motorcycle delivery and sharpening knives, and started buying shares in GameStop back in November.

"I went from a $9,000 position up to about $30,000 as of last night. Today I lost 10 grand," he said Thursday. "I didn't sell. I'm going to hold. It's been an emotional week, let's say that."

As with many crowd movements, it was hard to trace where it all started, though there were at least a few high-profile instigators. Among them was Roaring Kitty, a YouTube personality from a Boston suburb who became a legendary fixture on the Reddit forum, expressing an early interest in buying GameStop shares and inspiring a growing legion of followers to pore through its financials.

The Reddit-based investors used the chat platform Discord to fire each other up and the trading app Robinhood to buy shares with a few clicks on their smartphones. They soon found a shared enemy in hedge fund managers who tried to short the stock, encouraging each other to keep buying GameStop and push it ever higher —"to the moon."

Wilkinson said the forums this week probably struck newcomers as "really, really childish and crazy," full of rocketship emojis, calls to pump stocks written to the tune of sea shanties and a flood of newcomers trying to jump on the bandwagon, but he said that's not been his usual experience there.

"Some of the people who are on that thread are probably on par with the stock pickers of these hedge funds," he said. "It's knowing how to know who to listen to and who to ignore. It's really just a bunch of people sharing ideas. It's the same thing as when Jim Cramer gets on CNBC smashing buttons." ***(AP)***

Nation

Biden invites GOP lawmakers to White House virus relief talk

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Joe Biden has invited to the White House a group of 10 Republican senators who have proposed spending about one-third of what he is seeking in coronavirus aid.

White House press secretary Jen Psaki said Sunday that Biden had spoken with the leader of the group, Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine. The invitation to meet came hours after the lawmakers sent Biden a letter urging him to negotiate rather than try to ram through his $1.9 trillion package solely on Democratic votes.

Though Biden is wanting "a full exchange of views," Psaki reiterated that he remains in favor of moving forward with a far-reaching relief package.

"With the virus posing a grave threat to the country, and economic conditions grim for so many, the need for action is urgent, and the scale of what must be done is large," Psaki said.

The meeting would amount to the most public involvement for Biden in the negotiations for the next round of virus relief. Democrats and Republicans are far apart in their proposals for assistance.

In challenging Biden to fulfill his pledge of unity, the group said in its letter that its counterproposal will include $160 billion for vaccines, testing, treatment and personal protective equipment and call for more targeted relief than Biden's plan to issue $1,400 stimulus checks for most Americans.

Winning the support of 10 Republicans would be significant for Biden in the 50-50 Senate where Vice President Kamala Harris is the tie-breaker. If all Democrats were to back an eventual compromise bill, the legislation would reach the 60-vote threshold necessary to overcome potential blocking efforts and pass under regular Senate procedures.

"In the spirit of bipartisanship and unity, we have developed a COVID-19 relief framework that builds on prior COVID assistance laws, all of which passed with bipartisan support," the Republican senators wrote. "Our proposal reflects many of your stated priorities, and with your support, we believe that this plan could be approved quickly by Congress with bipartisan support."

The plea for Biden to give bipartisan negotiations more time comes as the president has shown signs of impatience as the more liberal wing of his party considers passing the relief package through a process known as budget reconciliation. That would allow the bill to advance with only the backing of his Democratic majority.

The Republicans did not provide many details of their proposal. One of the signatories, Louisiana Sen. Bill Cassidy, said that it would cost about $600 billion.

"If you can't find bipartisan compromise on COVID-19, I don't know where you can find it," said Ohio Sen. Rob Portman, who also signed the letter.

But even as Biden extended the invitation to the Republican lawmakers, Psaki said that $1,400 relief checks, substantial funding for reopening schools, aid to small businesses and hurting families, and more "is badly needed."

"As leading economists have said, the danger now is not in doing too much: it is in doing too little," Psaki said. "Americans of both parties are looking to their leaders to meet the moment."

AP
National Economic Council Director Brian Deese speaks during a press briefing at the White House, Friday, Jan. 22, 2021, in Washington.

ACROSS THE NATION

Major storm heads to Northeast after blanketing Midwest

After days of frigid temperatures, the Northeast on Sunday braced for a whopper of a storm that could dump well over a foot of snow in many areas, create blizzard-like conditions and cause travel problems for the next few days. It was already impacting coronavirus vaccinations in New York and New Jersey, with appointments for Monday needing to be canceled and rescheduled. The storm system blanketed parts of the Midwest in the most snow some places had seen in several years. Chicago got almost 7 inches (18 centimeters) of snow by Sunday morning, leading to the cancellation of a couple hundred flights at the city's two airports. In Wisconsin, snow depths in some counties near Lake Michigan had reached more than 15 inches (38 centimeters), and the snow was still falling. "That's more snow than we've seen in a decade," Chris Stumpf, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Sullivan, Wisconsin, told the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel.

1 dead, 1 injured in Wisconsin mall shooting; suspect fled

GRAND CHUTE, Wis. (AP)—A suspect left one person dead and another with minor injuries Sunday before fleeing a shooting scene at a northern Wisconsin mall, police said. Police were called to the Fox River Mall in Grand Chute, a suburb of Appleton, at about 3:30 p.m. Sunday. The unidentified shooter remained on the loose Sunday night, authorities said. Grand Chute Police Officer Travis Waas did not identify either victim. Wass said the shooter left the mall before officers arrived. Police said they were interviewing witnesses and following leads. No motive was immediately released. Photos from the scene showed officers, some in tactical gear, staging outside the mall and what appeared to be customers walking out with their hands in the air. Haylie Mirr, who works at a mall restaurant called Box Lunch, said she didn't know anything about the shooting, but said: "People just started running. We just locked the doors, and we had four customers in the store, we brought them to our back room."

Police: Tennessee man stabs man, wields bats in mask dispute

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—A Tennessee man is accused of stabbing a man with whom he got into an argument over not wearing a mask and later swinging two metal baseball bats at police officers, according to police documents. A Metro Nashville police affidavit says Jerry Cowan, 53, began arguing with another man outside of an apartment complex early Sunday because Cowan was not wearing a mask. Cowan allegedly pulled out a pocket knife and a "long blade with a makeshift wooden handle" and stabbed the other man in his arm and near his chin, according to the affidavit. The victim escaped into a nearby residence and called police, the records showed. Investigators wrote that Cowan retreated into his home and responding officers heard "a metallic object hitting the back of the door twice," The Tennessean reported, citing the affidavit.

Trump names 2 lawyers to impeachment defense team

WASHINGTON (AP)—Former president Donald Trump announced a new impeachment legal defense team Sunday, one day after it was revealed that he had parted ways with an earlier set of attorneys with just over a week to go before his Senate trial.

The two representing Trump will be defense lawyer David Schoen, a frequent television legal commentator, and Bruce Castor, a former district attorney in Pennsylvania who has faced criticism for his decision to not charge actor Bill Cosby in a sex crimes case.

Both attorneys issued statements through Trump's office saying that they were honored to take the job.

"The strength of our Constitution is about to be tested like never before in our history. It is strong and resilient. A document written for the ages, and it will triumph over partisanship yet again, and always," said Castor, who served as district attorney for Montgomery County, outside of Philadelphia, from 2000 to 2008.

The announcement Sunday was intended to promote a sense of stability surrounding the Trump defense team as his impeachment trial nears. The former president has struggled to hire and retain attorneys willing to represent him against charges that he incited the deadly riot at the U.S. Capitol, which happened when a mob of loyalists stormed Congress as lawmakers met Jan. 6 to certify Joe Biden's electoral victory.

That's a contrast from his first impeachment trial, when Trump's high-profile team of attorneys included Alan Dershowitz, one of the best-known criminal defense lawyers in the country, as well as White House counsel Pat Cipollone, and Jay Sekulow, who has argued cases before the Supreme Court.

Trump's team had initially announced that Butch Bowers, a South Carolina lawyer, would lead his legal team after an introduction from Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham. But that team unraveled over the weekend due to differences over legal strategy.

One person familiar with their thinking said Bowers and another South Carolina lawyer, Deborah Barbier, left the team because Trump wanted them to use a defense that relied on allegations of election fraud, and the lawyers were not willing to do so. The person was not authorized to speak publicly about the situation and requested anonymity

Republicans and aides to Trump, the first president to be impeached twice in American history, have made clear that they intend to make a simple argument in the trial: Trump's trial, scheduled for the week of Feb. 8, is unconstitutional because he is no longer in office.

"The Democrats' efforts to impeach a president who has already left office is totally unconstitutional and so bad for our country," Trump adviser Jason Miller has said.

Many legal scholars, however, say there is no bar to an impeachment trial despite Trump having left the White House. One argument is that state constitutions that predate the U.S. Constitution allowed impeachment after officials left office. The Constitution's drafters also did not specifically bar the practice.

Castor, a Republican who was the elected district attorney of Pennsylvania's third-most populated county, decided against charging Cosby in a 2004 sexual encounter. He ran for the job again in 2015, and his judgment in the Cosby case was a key issue used against him by the Democrat who defeated him.

Castor has said that he personally thought Cosby should have been arrested, but that the evidence wasn't strong enough to prove the case beyond a reasonable doubt.

Asia

Myanmar military says it's taking control of country

NAYPYITAW, Myanmar (AP)—Myanmar military television said Monday that the military was taking control of the country for one year, while reports said many of the country's senior politicians including Aung San Suu Kyi had been detained.

A presenter on military-owned Myawaddy TV made the announcement and cited a section of the military-drafted constitution that allows the military to take control in times of national emergency. He said the reason for takeover was in part due to the government's failure to act on the military's claims of voter fraud in last November's election and its failure to postpone the election because of the coronavirus crisis.

The announcement follows days of concern about the threat of a military coup—and military denials—and came on the morning the country's new Parliament session was to begin.

The detention of the politicians and cuts in communication services on Monday were the first signals that plans to seize power were in motion. Phone and internet access to Naypyitaw was lost and Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy party could not be reached.

AP

In this Dec. 17, 2019, file photo, Myanmar's leader Aung San Suu Kyi speaks during a joint press conference with Vietnam's Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc after their meeting at the Presidential Palace in Naypyitaw, Myanmar.

The Irrawaddy, an established online news service, reported that Suu Kyi, who as state counsellor is the nation's top leader, and the country's president, Win Myint, were both detained in the pre-dawn hours. The news service cited Myo Nyunt, a spokesman for the NLD.

Its report said that the party's Central Executive Committee members, lawmakers and regional Cabinet members had also been taken into custody.

The U.S., Australia and others issued statements expressing concern reports and urging Myanmar's military to respect the rule of law.

"The United States is alarmed by reports that the Burmese military has taken steps to undermine the country's democratic transition, including the arrest of State Counselor Aung San Suu Kyi and other civilian officials in Burma," White House spokesperson Jen Psaki said in a statement from Washington. She said President Joe Biden had been briefed on the reported developments.

Thousands flee Hong Kong for UK, fearing China crackdown

HONG KONG (AP)—Thousands of Hong Kongers have already made the sometimes painful decision to leave behind their hometown and move to Britain since Beijing imposed a strict national security law on the Chinese territory last summer. Their numbers are expected to swell to the hundreds of thousands.

Some are leaving because they fear punishment for supporting the pro-democracy protests that swept the former British colony in 2019. Others say China's encroachment on their way of life and civil liberties has become unbearable, and they want to seek a better future for their children abroad. Most say they don't plan to ever go back.

The moves are expected to accelerate now that 5 million Hong Kongers are eligible to apply for visas to Britain, allowing them to live, work and study there and eventually apply to become British citizens. Applications for the British National Overseas visa officially opened Sunday, though many have already arrived on British soil to get a head start.

Britain's government said some 7,000 people with British National Overseas passports — a travel document that Hong Kongers could apply for before the city was handed over to Chinese control in 1997 — have arrived since July on the previously allowed six month visa. It estimates that over 300,000 people will take up the offer of extended residency rights in the next five years.

"Before the announcement of the BN(O) visa in July, we didn't have many enquiries about U.K. immigration, maybe less than 10 a month," said Andrew Lo, founder of Anlex Immigration Consultants in Hong Kong. "Now we receive about 10 to 15 calls a day asking about it."

Mike, a photojournalist, said he plans to apply for the visa and move to Leeds with his wife and young daughter in April.

His motivation to leave Hong Kong came after the city's political situation deteriorated following the anti-government protests and he realized that the city's police force was not politically neutral. The police have been criticized by pro-democracy supporters for brutality and the use of excessive violence.

Mike said moving to Britain was important as he believed the education system in Hong Kong will be affected by the political situation and it will be better for his daughter to study in the U.K.

Mike agreed to speak on the condition that he only be identified by his first name out of fear of official retaliation.

Lo said that with the new visa, the barrier to entry to move to the U.K. becomes extremely low, with no language or education qualification requirements. British National Overseas passport holders need to prove that they have enough money to support themselves for six months and prove that they are clear of tuberculosis, according to the U.K. government.

Currently, Lo assists three to four families a week in their move to the U.K. About 60% of those are families with young children, while the remaining are young couples or young professionals.

Cindy, a Hong Kong businesswoman and the mother of two young children, arrived in London last week.

World

EU: AstraZeneca to supply 9M more doses of vaccine

BERLIN (AP)—Pharmaceutical company AstraZeneca has agreed to supply 9 million additional doses of its coronavirus vaccine to the European Union during the first quarter, the bloc's executive arm said Sunday.

The new target of 40 million doses by the end of March is still only half what the British-Swedish company had originally aimed for before it announced a shortfall due to production problems, triggering a spat between AstraZeneca and the EU last week.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said after a call with seven vaccine makers Sunday that AstraZeneca will also begin deliveries one week sooner than scheduled and expand its manufacturing capacity in Europe.

"Step forward on vaccines," tweeted Von der Leyen, who has come under intense pressure over the European Commission's handling of the vaccine orders in recent days.

The EU is far behind Britain and the United States in getting its population of 450 million vaccinated against the virus. The slow rollout has been blamed on a range of national problems as well as slower authorization of the vaccines and an initial shortage of supply.

AstraZeneca's announcement last week that it would initially supply only 31 million doses to the EU's 27 member states due to production problems set off a fierce dispute between the two sides, with officials in Brussels saying they feared the company was treating the bloc unfairly compared to other customers, such as the United Kingdom.

On Friday, hours after regulators authorized the vaccine for use across the EU, the commission said it was tightening rules on exports of coronavirus vaccines, sparking an angry response from Britain. The commission has since made clear the new measure will not limit vaccine shipments produced in the 27-nation bloc to Northern Ireland, a U.K. territory that was guaranteed unhindered cross-border access to the Republic of Ireland under the post-Brexit deal between Britain and the EU.

EU member states praised the bloc's executive branch last year for signing numerous deals with vaccine makers, saying the joint purchase using the combined market weight of the entire bloc had ensured a fair distribution for all 27 countries at good prices.

Since then the mood among many EU citizens toward Brussels has soured, as countries outside the bloc speed ahead in the race to vaccinate their populations.

The British government hasn't been shy about promoting its relative vaccine success, which has helped distract from the fact that the country remains top of the table for deaths in Europe.

Official figures show 598,389 shots were administered across the U.K. on Saturday, more than six times the number that Germany managed Friday, the last day for which figures were available.

Germany has so far given at least one dose to 2.2% of its population. Britain has done the same for 13.2% of its citizens.

In response, Chancellor Angela Merkel has summoned state governors Monday to discuss what German media are describing as a "vaccination debacle. "Von der Leyen, who was Germany's defense minister before taking the post in Brussels, insisted the EU had "made good progress."

Over 5,100 arrested at pro-Navalny protests across Russia

MOSCOW (AP)—Chanting slogans against President Vladimir Putin, tens of thousands took to the streets Sunday across Russia to demand the release of jailed opposition leader Alexei Navalny, keeping up nationwide protests that have rattled the Kremlin. More than 5,100 people were detained by police, according to a monitoring group, and some were beaten.

The massive protests came despite efforts by Russian authorities to stem the tide of demonstrations after tens of thousands rallied across the country last weekend in the largest, most widespread show of discontent that Russia had seen in years. Despite threats of jail terms, warnings to social media groups and tight police cordons, the protests again engulfed cities across Russia's 11 time zones on Sunday.

Navalny's team quickly called another protest in Moscow for Tuesday, when he is set to face a court hearing that could send him to prison for years.

The 44-year-old Navalny, an anti-corruption investigator who is Putin's best-known critic, was arrested on Jan. 17 upon returning from Germany, where he spent five months recovering from nerve-agent poisoning that he blames on the Kremlin. Russian authorities have rejected the accusations. He was arrested for allegedly violating his parole conditions by not reporting for meetings with law enforcement when he was recuperating in Germany.

The United States urged Russia to release Navalny and criticized the crackdown on protests.

"The U.S. condemns the persistent use of harsh tactics against peaceful protesters and journalists by Russian authorities for a second week straight," U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Twitter.

The Russian Foreign Ministry rejected Blinken's call as "crude interference in Russia's internal affairs" and accused Washington of trying to destabilize the situation in the country by backing the protests.

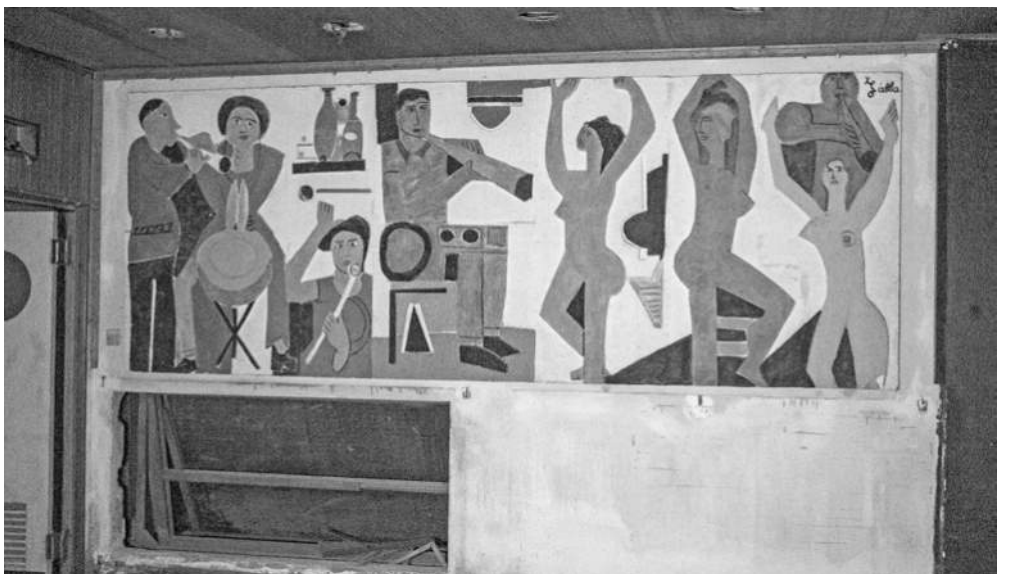
On Sunday, police detained more than 5,100 people in cities nationwide, according to OVD-Info, a group that monitors political arrests, surpassing some 4,000 detentions at the demonstrations across Russia on Jan. 23.

In Moscow, authorities introduced unprecedented security measures in the city center, closing subway stations near the Kremlin, cutting bus traffic and ordering restaurants and stores to stay closed.

Navalny's team initially called for Sunday's protest to be held on Moscow's Lubyanka Square, home to the main headquarters of the Federal Security Service, which Navalny contends was responsible for his poisoning. Facing police cordons around the square, the protest shifted to other central squares and streets.

Life & Style

Wrangle over valuable art uncovered in Cypriot ghost town



AP

In this Tuesday Oct. 20, 2020 shows a priceless and very rare concrete relief by Cyprus' most avant-garde artist of the 1960s, Christoforos Savva, appears on the wall of the defunct Perroquet nightclub in the abandoned ghost-town of Varosha in the breakaway, Turkish Cypriot north of ethnically divided Cyprus.

NICOSIA, Cyprus (AP)—The abstract figures of naked women gyrating to the rhythms of a five-piece band had shocked many people almost 60 years ago as they eyed the artwork for the first time on the walls of a popular restaurant-nightclub in Cyprus.

The valuable and very rare concrete relief by Christoforos Savva, Cyprus' most avant-garde artist of the 1960s, had lain hidden for decades in the underground recesses of the Perroquet nightclub in abandoned Varosha—an inaccessible ghost town that had been under Turkish military control since a 1974 war ethnically cleaved the island nation.

But with Varosha's controversial partial opening last November, the artwork has again come to light following a report by local newspaper Politis. Now, the man who says he commissioned the art from Savva is asking authorities for help to have it removed and transported to the country's national gallery for all to see.

Former Perroquet owner Avgerinos Nikitas, 93, a Greek Cypriot, has appealed to a committee composed of both Greek and Turkish Cypriots that's tasked with protecting Cyprus' cultural treasures on both sides of the divide to help remove the 13 sections.

"In return, I pledge to cede these pieces to the National Collection as a small contribution to Christoforos Savva's huge body of work," Nikitas said in a letter obtained by The Associated Press, addressed to the committee as well as Cyprus' education ministry.

But the whole venture could be derailed as the Greek Cypriot family that owns the Esperia Tower hotel that hosted the Perroquet club insist that the artwork legally belongs to them. They say they won't allow their "private property" to be removed and transferred and are warning of legal action.

Speaking on behalf of his family, Panayiotis Constantinou told the AP that their lawyer has advised them that the hotel, the club and everything inside it belongs to the family, regardless of the Savva artwork's cultural value.

"We respect and value culture, but this is private property about which we haven't been asked anything about removing it, and on top of that, someone else lays claim to it," Constantinou said.

Art historians credit Savva as one of the most influential artists of the time who brought the country's inward-looking, traditionalist art world into modernity in the years immediately after Cyprus gained independence from British colonial rule in 1960.

A painter and sculptor, Savva shifted away from the established, representational art styles by encompassing influences like cubism, which he picked up during his stays in London and Paris through the 1950s, into his voluminous artwork. He died in 1968.

"Savva was an innovator who always sought to break new ground and challenge the conservative times in which he lived," said Andre Zivanari, director of the Point Center for Contemporary Art.

Savva's work reflected the joie de vivre of Varosha, which at the time was Cyprus' most progressive, popular tourist resort—a favorite with visitors from Europe and beyond, said Yiannis Toumazis, an art history professor and a Greek Cypriot member of the committee on culture.

That all changed in the summer of 1974 when Turkey invaded following a coup by supporters of union with Greece. Turkish armed forces took over an empty Varosha and kept it virtually sealed off until last November, when breakaway Turkish Cypriot authorities re-opened a stretch of beach to the public.

The move caused much consternation among the suburb's Greek Cypriot residents and protests from the island's internationally recognized government amid concerns that the Turkish Cypriot north's hard-line leadership aimed to place the entire area under its control.

Cyprus' former first lady and cultural committee co-chair Androulla Vassiliou told the AP that the body would look at bringing the reliefs to the island's southern part, once new Turkish Cypriot members are appointed.

Rod Stewart lawyer: Plea deal in works in hotel altercation

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP)—Rod Stewart and his son have worked out details for a plea deal to settle misdemeanor battery charges stemming from an altercation with a security guard at a posh Florida hotel, a lawyer for the rock icon says.

Defense attorneys said Friday that Stewart and his son, Sean Stewart, would not be going to trial for the altercation at The Breakers Hotel in Palm Beach on New Year's Day 2020, the South Florida SunSentinel r eported. Stewart's lawyers didn't elaborate on the details.

The Stewarts' lawyer, Guy Fronstin of Boca Raton, has been negotiating a plea deal with Assistant State Attorney Zachary O'Neill, according to the SunSentinel.

"It sounds like everything's been worked out," said attorney Alexandra Antonacci, speaking on behalf of Fronstin, the newspaper reported. She said paperwork still has to be completed in the case.

Prosecutors had no immediate announcement in the case, but did say Saturday that plea deal negotiations are ongoing.

Stewart, 76 and a member of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, is best known for such hits as "Maggie May" and "Tonight's the Night." The London-born singer was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II in 2016.

Security guard Jessie Dixon told police then that the now 76-year-old Stewart and his family were at the check-in table for a private party that they weren't authorized to attend.

Dixon said the group became loud and began causing a scene. Dixon told investigators he put his hand on the younger Stewart's chest and told him to back up and make space, the report said.

That's when Sean Stewart, the rock star's 40-year-old son, got "nose to nose" with Dixon.

Sean Stewart then shoved Dixon backwards. Rod Stewart punched Dixon in his "left rib cage area" with a closed fist, a police report said.

The police report said Sean Stewart told investigators he became agitated when they were not able to attend the event "due to Dixon's interaction with him and his family."

Palm Beach officer Stephen Mancino said he viewed security footage at the hotel and determined that the Stewarts were the "primary aggressors."

Two Breakers employees who were working the private event told police they saw Sean Stewart push Dixon and Rod Stewart punch the guard.

Dixon signed an affidavit saying that he wanted to press charges against the Stewarts.

An online court date is scheduled for March 26.

Assistant works their way up only to be sidelined by boss

DEAR ABBY: When my boss hired me as an assistant four years ago, she specifically told me my job was to do whatever the person above me wants. I wasn't allowed to communicate with anyone on the job other than the lady above me. Even though it was tough to watch my supervisor make so many bad decisions and get away with it, I did what was required of me.

Now I have worked my way up and have an assistant of my own. However, my boss has given my assistant much more than she ever gave me when I was in that position. Sometimes I feel like she acts like I'm not valued. I want to point it out, but I don't want to be that kind of person. I love what I do, but I don't know how much longer I can handle being treated this way.

Should I tell her how I feel? She constantly leaves me out of important decisions and then tries to play mind games to make up for it. She is also giving my assistant important information before telling me. I don't know what I should do.

FRUSTRATED IN OREGON

DEAR FRUSTRATED: Many companies have annual reviews for employees in which subjects like the ones you have raised are discussed. If this isn't the case in your firm, ask for one.

During that conversation, tell your boss that sometimes you feel your efforts aren't valued and why. Remind her that you were instructed not to talk with anyone on the job other than the person immediately above you, and you feel undercut because your assistant is being given important information before it is shared with you. It may clear the air. However, if it doesn't, by all means start searching for another job, since you seem to be considering it anyway.

DEAR ABBY: I am worried about my kids and their social well-being. I understand we are in a pandemic. Our family has been responsible and socially distancing, but it seems like their friends have all been spending time together. Understandably, my kids are jealous and angry at their father and me for putting restrictions on them. But I am worried about their lack of social interaction and how it may affect their future. One of them has a harder time making friends and doesn't have many things in common with their peers, which led to spending more time at home when there was no pandemic.

WORRIED MOM IN NEW YORK

DEAR WORRIED: Until the threat of COVID has been resolved, it's up to you as parents to decide how you restrict your children in relation to the pandemic. Of course you want to protect them, even if your choices aren't popular. Kids can be careless. They can forget to pull their masks up and stay socially distanced, and the results can be tragic. But there are relatively safe outdoor activities parents can plan to keep their children from being completely isolated.

As to your child who is less socially adept, this is a subject to discuss with his/her teachers or a child psychologist. Perhaps you can help by researching online interest groups this child can join that will connect them with other children—under your supervision, of course.

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more sociable person, order "How to Be Popular." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEAR ABBY

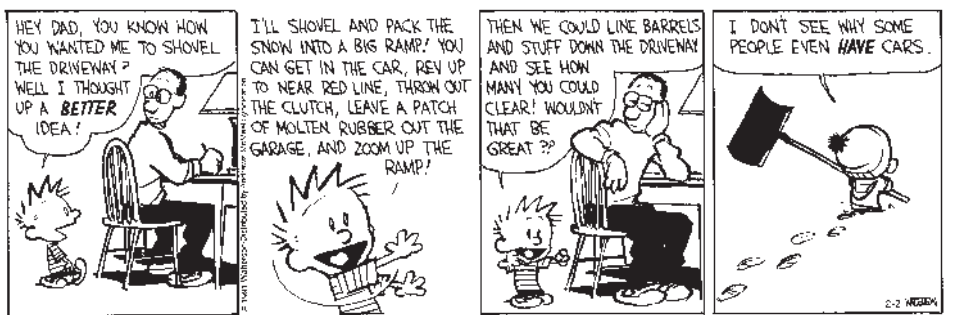
By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

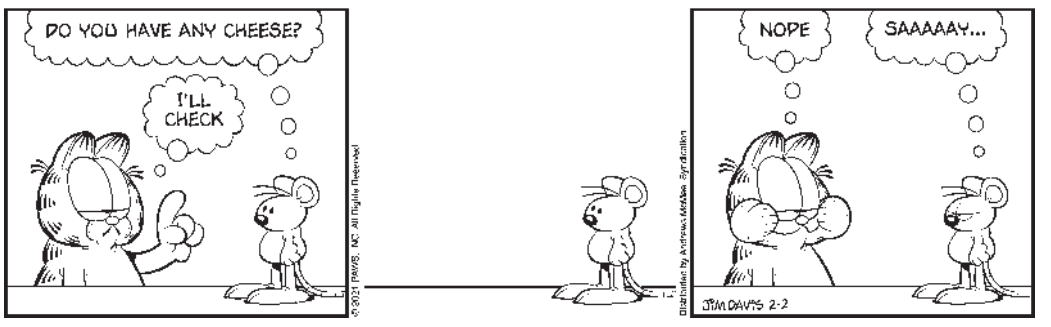
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


HEY DAD, YOU KNOW HOW YOU WANTED ME TO SHOVEL THE DRIVEWAY? WELL I THOUGHT UP A BETTER IDEA!
I'LL SHOVEL AND PACK THE SNOW INTO A BIG RAMP! YOU CAN GET IN THE CAR, REV UP TO NEAR RED LINE, THROW OUT THE CLUTCH, LEAVE A PATCH OF MOLTEN RUBBER OUT THE GARAGE, AND ZOOM UP THE RAMP!
THEN WE COULD LINE BARRELS AND STUFF DOWN THE DRIVEWAY AND SEE HOW MANY YOU COULD CLEAR! WOULDN'T THAT BE GREAT??
I DON'T SEE WHY SOME PEOPLE EVEN HAVE CARS.

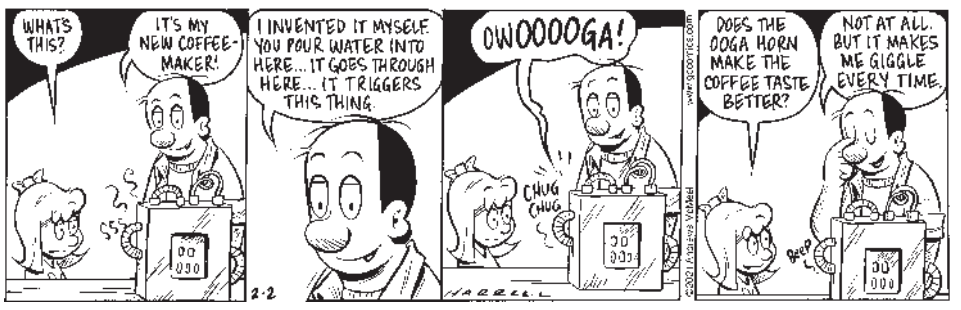
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


WHAT'S THIS?
IT'S MY NEW COFFEE-MAKER!
I INVENTED IT MYSELF. YOU POUR WATER INTO HERE... IT GOES THROUGH HERE... IT TRIGGERS THIS THING.
OWOOOOGA!
CHUG CHUG
DOES THE OOGA HORN MAKE THE COFFEE TASTE BETTER?
NOT AT ALL. BUT IT MAKES ME GIGGLE EVERY TIME.
BEEP

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Docile
5 Eyeglass frames
9 Scoundrel
12 Actor Neeson
13 "Super-food" berry
14 "— you kidding?"
15 Cheater's reference
17 Director Howard
18 Missing
19 Kennedy or Roosevelt
21 Rainbow-shaped
24 Dick Tracy's love
25 Thailand, once
26 Used Google
30 Medit. nation
31 Audition CDs
32 Chest-beating beast
33 Parts
35 Ship's staff
36 "I'm a klutz!"
37 British nobles
38 Egypt's Mubarak
40 Fly high
42 "This tastes awful!"
43 Fudge seller
48 Roman 1051
49 Loyal
50 Actor Epps of "This Is Us"
51 Vigor
52 Bloodline sharers
53 Golfer McIlroy

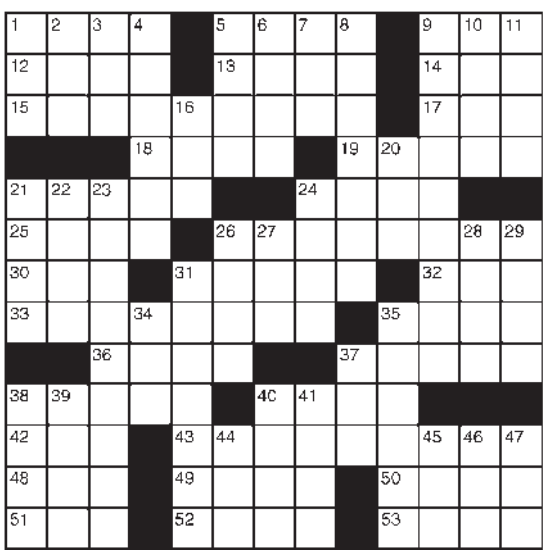
DOWN

1 Pampering, for short
2 Vacuum's lack
3 Avril follower
4 Insignia
5 Stadium cheers
6 "Cold As Ever" rapper
7 Fannie —
8 Tot tenders
9 Crafty poker player
10 Yankee nickname
11 Contradict
16 Turf
20 PC key
21 Unrepaired
22 Get up
23 Port vessel
24 New Mexico resort
26 D.C. VIPs
27 911 responder
28 Duel tool
29 Morning droplets
31 Portrays
34 Calendar abbr.
35 Arrow on a computer screen
37 24 hours
38 Camel feature
39 Leer at
40 Rebuff
41 Rhyming tributes
44 Shapiro of NPR
45 Med. plan
46 Rowing need
47 Snoop

Solution time: 22 mins.

D	A	R	T		B	A	N		O	D	E	S
A	M	A	R	I	L	L	O		M	I	R	E
N	O	H	I	T	T	E	R		E	M	I	R
			P	A	S		E	L	R	E	K	A
S	P	O	O	L		V	A	S	T			
A	T	A	D		N		S	S	A	N	S	
W	A	H		M	O	T	O	R		O		L
	S	U	R	E	C	A	N		E	U	R	O
			A	S	H	E		A	N	N	E	X
E	A	R	T	H	A		A	S	I			
F	O	O	T		N	O	B	I	G	G		E
T	U	N	A		C	R	E	A	M	E	R	Y
S	I	A	N		E	E	L		A	L	E	E

Yesterday's answer 2-2



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955!** 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Shakira, 44; Christie Brinkley, 67; Brent Spiner, 72; Graham Nash, 79.

Happy Birthday: Follow through. Motivation and discipline will help you achieve whatever you set out to conquer this year. Ask questions, gather information and strive to make a difference. Taking care of your mental, emotional and physical well-being will help you ward off any negative influences you encounter. Trust and believe in what you are capable of doing. Your numbers are 9, 13, 21, 27, 33, 42, 49.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* You'll be right on target. Your insight and ability to take control and get things done will be impressive. How you handle others will pay off. Time spent with someone you love will lead to a new chapter in your relationship. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Uncertainty will prevail if you make a premature move. Consider every angle before you forge ahead with plans that can affect your income. When in doubt, talk to an expert. Avoid locations and contact with individuals who may present a health risk. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* You'll be offered insight into something that can help you make an important decision. Added discipline will pay off when putting together a proposal or taking advantage of an opportunity that comes your way. Romance is on the rise. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Don't flirt with temptation. An attraction to something or someone will put you at a disadvantage if you are too friendly or accommodating. Take a wait-and-see approach and let situations unfold naturally. An original idea will pay off. ✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Handle professional matters and partnerships with discretion. Making an impromptu move or decision will set you back. Look for opportunities that are foolproof. Nurture essential relationships to avoid a falling out. Personal growth and a healthy lifestyle are encouraged. Romance will enhance your life. ✪✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Do whatever it takes to arm yourself with the necessary information, skills and experience to follow your dreams. Don't give up on something that will satisfy you. Take responsibility for your happiness. It's up to you to make things happen. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Don't procrastinate. Opportunities are available; all you have to do is to take action. Speak up, share your ideas and engage in conversations geared toward positive lifestyle changes that are budget-friendly and intriguing. Love and romance are favored. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Keep your thoughts and plans a secret. Don't give anyone ammunition that will set you back or interfere with your life. Work under the radar until you have everything in place. When ready to reveal, do so in an unprecedented fashion. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Reach out to people who can help you bring about change. An opportunity to raise your earning potential or start a new career looks good. Interviewing, debating and making your point will lead to victory. Romance is in the stars. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Take a back seat and listen. The information offered will help you make adjustments at home to improve your performance, but roommates, family or friends aren't likely to be impressed. Be mindful of others, and compromise. ✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Take care of financial, medical and legal matters before they have a chance to escalate. Let your instincts lead the way, and allow your ability to recognize who is and who isn't on your side influence you to navigate your way to victory. ✪✪✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Use your intuition and creative mind to push forward. Bring about change that will help you get ahead. Let go of what no longer works for you and the people who drag you down instead of lift you up. Choose a positive path. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are unique, intelligent and humanitarian. You are impatient and restless.

1 star: *Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes.* **2 stars:** *You can accomplish, but don't rely on others.* **3 stars:** *Focus and you'll reach your goals.* **4 stars:** *Aim high; start new projects.* **5 stars:** *Nothing can stop you; go for gold.*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	8		7	6		
2		1			8	9
			8			3
	2			3		9
9	7		4			6 7
	4			9		
	9	6			5	1
			1	5		8

Difficulty Level ★★ 2/02

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

1	2	3	6	8	7	4	5	9
5	8	9	3	4	2	1	6	7
4	7	6	9	5	1	2	3	8
3	6	7	1	2	8	9	4	5
8	4	1	7	9	5	6	2	3
2	9	5	4	3	6	7	8	1
6	5	8	2	1	9	3	7	4
7	1	4	5	6	3	8	9	2
9	3	2	8	7	4	5	1	6

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

A LEBANESE FEAST **Solution: 11 letters**

S	U	M	M	U	H	S	I	K	A	N	A	M	P	G
A	D	T	R	U	G	O	Y	N	O	I	N	O	R	E
E	V	E	L	E	S	E	E	H	C	F	T	A	M	Y
P	F	A	E	I	L	K	R	O	P	T	T	Y	R	R
K	A	T	L	S	T	L	I	A	A	A	H	A	B	T
C	L	F	R	K	E	N	C	G	A	T	E	U	P	S
I	I	A	A	F	A	M	E	Z	Z	E	L	E	A	A
H	P	K	A	T	L	B	A	L	E	G	U	M	H	P
C	Ⓣ	Ⓛ	Ⓐ	Ⓢ	T	K	H	S	U	N	O	M	E	L
T	A	H	I	N	I	O	C	R	E	S	B	E	W	R
F	F	E	E	B	M	A	U	I	A	S	B	L	H	E
I	V	V	B	E	C	I	P	S	L	L	A	O	A	P
S	E	E	S	L	A	B	N	E	H	R	T	N	I	P
H	H	S	D	N	O	M	L	A	M	B	A	T	E	E
P	U	R	Y	S	H	A	W	A	R	M	A	G	S	P

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Ahweh, Allspice, Almonds, Baklava, Beef, Bulgur, Cheese, Chickpeas, Event, Falafel, Fattoush, Fish, Garlic, Homes, Hummus, Kafta, Kibbeh, Kofta, Labneh, Lamb, Lemon, Lentil, Manakish, Melon, Mezze, Onion, Parsley, Pastry, Pepper, Pilaf, Pita, Pork, Pottage, Rice, Salt, Samosa, Seeds, Sesame, Shawarma, Syrup, Tabbouleh, Tahini, Thyme, Yogurt, Za'atar

Yesterday's Answer: Hooks

To purchase **THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volumes 47 through 61** order on line at www.WonderWordBooks.com.

Westbrook, Beal's late 3s lift Wizards over Nets

WASHINGTON (AP)—Wizards coach Scott Brooks envisioned something like this when Washington acquired Russell Westbrook from Houston for John Wall and a draft pick.

It took more time than expected because of a nagging injury, but maybe things are starting to look up for the team with the worst record in the NBA.

At least for a night, they sure did.

Bradley Beal and Westbrook hit 3-pointers in a wild 3.8-second sequence in the final seconds to help the Wizards stun Kevin Durant and the Brooklyn Nets 149-146 on Sunday night.

Westbrook had 41 points, 10 rebounds and eight assists, and NBA scoring leader Beal had 37 points. In the fourth quarter, Beal had 22 points and Westbrook had 15. Durant, second in the NBA in scoring, also had 37 points.

"Russell willed this game," Brooks said about Westbrook, who has only played in 10 of 16 games due to a quad injury. "This is what he does. He can do it every night. He doesn't shoot the ball well every night but he doesn't take nights out."

With Washington down 146-141, Beal hit a 3-pointer with 8.1 seconds left. Garrison Mathews deflected Joe Harris' inbounds pass to Westbrook and he made a 3 with 4.3 seconds left for a 147-146 lead.

AP

Brooklyn Nets forward Kevin Durant, left, and Washington Wizards guard Russell Westbrook, reach in for the loose ball during the first half of an NBA game, Sunday, Jan. 31, 2021, in Washington.

"It was a dumb mistake on my part," Harris said about the inbounds pass that led to the go-ahead basket.

It was epic collapse from a team hoping to contend for an NBA title but the Nets did get a great look to force overtime.

Kyrie Irving found Timothe Luwawu-Carbarrot under the basket with 2.9 seconds left, but his layup attempt spun around the rim and failed to drop. Beal added two free throws with 0.7 seconds left as the Wizards broke a four-game losing streak and improved to a still NBA-worst 4-12.

"I couldn't guard a stick today," Irving said. "They were going right around me, and I was getting frustrated, but they kept attacking."

Harris scored a career-high 30 points, and Irving had 26 for Brooklyn which led by as many as 18. The Nets had won four in a row.

James Harden sat out because of a thigh contusion, the first game he has missed since being traded from Houston to Brooklyn on Jan. 13.

"It's not looking great defensively for our team, giving up that many points," Durant said after Washington shot 51.9% for the game.

Westbrook has set season scoring highs in consecutive games. He entered the game averaging 18.9 points, his lowest output since his second season in 2009-10.

Nuggets 128, Jazz 117

In Denver, Nikola Jokic matched his career high with 47 points and the fast-starting Nuggets ended Utah's winning streak at 11.

Jokic was 17 for 26 from the field, hit all four of his 3-point attempts, made 9 of 10 free throws and had 12 rebounds and five assists. He scored 33 points in the first half.

Will Barton added 18 points, and Jamal Murray had 16 to help the Nuggets win for the sixth time in seven games.

Utah lost for the first time since Jan. 6 at New York. Bojan Bogdanovic led the Jazz with 29 points, and Donovan Mitchell had 13 in 31 minutes after missing two games while in concussion protocol.

Clippers 129, Knicks 115

In New York, Kawhi Leonard scored 28 points and Los Angeles rang up the highest point total of the season against the NBA's leading defense, beating the Knicks for its 10th victory in 11 games.

The Clippers shredded the NBA leaders in fewest points allowed per game to break away after leading by one after two quarters. They surpassed the 102.7 points per game the Knicks had been allowing with their first basket of the final quarter.

Reggie Jackson added 18 points and Paul George had 17.

76ers 119, Pacers 110

In Indianapolis, Tobias Harris scored 27 points and Furkan Korkmaz added 17, including the go-ahead baskets in the fourth quarter, to help Philadelphia complete a frantic rally against Indiana.

The 76ers trailed by 16 early in the fourth but closed on a 31-6 run for their sixth win in seven games this time without All-Star center Joel Embiid, who sat out with a sore back.

Raptors 115, Magic 102

In Tampa Bay, Pascal Siakam had 30 points and 10 rebounds in Toronto's victory over Orlando.

Kyle Lowry had 12 points and 14 assists, and Aaron Baynes added eight points and 16 rebounds to help the Raptors snapa three-game losing streak.

Rookie Cole Anthony led Orlando with 16 points. The Magic have lost 11 of 13.

Timberwolves 109, Cavaliers 104

In Minneapolis, Malik Beasley scored 23 points and rookie Anthony Edwards had 23 in his second straight start in Minnesota's victory over Cleveland.

Minnesota snapped a three-game losing streak and won for just the third time in 17 games.

Andre Drummond had 25 points and 22 rebounds—his third 20-20 game of the year—for Cleveland.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic

	W	L	PCT	GB
Philadelphia	15	6	.714	0.0
Brooklyn	13	9	.591	2.5
Boston	10	8	.556	3.5
New York	9	12	.429	6.0
Toronto	8	12	.400	6.5

Central

Milwaukee	11	8	.579	0.0
Indiana	11	9	.550	0.5
Cleveland	9	11	.450	2.5
Chicago	7	11	.389	3.5
Detroit	5	15	.250	6.5

Southeast

Atlanta	10	9	.526	0.0
Charlotte	9	11	.450	1.5
Orlando	8	13	.381	3.0
Miami	7	12	.368	3.0
Washington	4	12	.250	4.5

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Pacific

LA Clippers	16	5	.762	0.0
LA Lakers	15	6	.714	1.0
Phoenix	10	8	.556	4.5
Golden State	11	9	.550	4.5
Sacramento	8	11	.421	7.

Southwest

Memphis	8	6	.571	0.0
San Antonio	11	9	.550	0.0
Houston	9	9	.500	1.0
Dallas	8	12	.400	3.0
New Orleans	7	11	.389	3.0

Northwest

Utah	15	5	.750	0.0
Denver	12	8	.600	3.0
Portland	10	8	.556	4.0
Oklahoma City	8	10	.444	6.0
Minnesota	5	14	.263	9.5

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MLB proposes delaying start, cut to 154 games

NEW YORK (AP)—Major League Baseball has proposed a one-month delay in starting spring training due to the coronavirus pandemic and pushing back opening day to April 28, two people familiar with the plan told The Associated Press.

Under the plan presented to the players' union on Friday, the regular season would be cut from 162 games to 154.

Also, the playoffs would be expanded from 10 teams to 14, the designated hitter would extend to the National League for the second straight season and MLB would keep the experimental rules for seven-inning doubleheaders and beginning extra innings with a runner on second base.

All players would report for spring training on March 22, back from the current calendar that calls a voluntary reporting date of Feb. 17 for pitchers, catchers and injured players, and Feb. 22 for others.

Opening day would be pushed back 27 days from its currently scheduled April 1 and the regular season would end Oct. 10 instead of Oct. 3. The postseason would extend into November.

The people familiar with the plan spoke on condition of anonymity Sunday because no announcements were made. The sides have not discussed the proposal with each other since MLB made it.

A day before the plan was presented, Commissioner Rob Manfred said he would like to know by his regular Monday call with owners if the union had interest in delaying the start of spring training.

The reasoning behind the delay would be to gain time for more vaccinations and better assess the health situation.

Seven teams in each league would make the playoffs, and only the division winner with the best record would receive a bye in the best-of-three first round. There would be a selection show in which the seeded teams would be able to, in order of percentage, select their first-round opponent. The three advancing teams in each league and the one with a bye would advance to the best-of-five Division Series, starting the traditional rounds of the postseason.

While the plan says players would receive 100% of pay if all 154 scheduled games are played, Manfred would have an expanded right to stop spring training, the regular season or the postseason under certain conditions. Those would be if government restrictions prevent five or more teams from playing home games even without fans, if government rules restrict travel in the United States, if Manfred determines after consultation with medical experts and the union there is an unreasonable safety risk to players or staff or if the number of regular major leaguers unavailable because of COVID-19 undermines competitive integrity.

Each team would start with 18 scheduled days off, and each team would be allowed to be scheduled up to 12 split doubleheaders.

Players usually are reluctant to agree to split doubleheaders because of the lengthy day at the ballpark each entails

The regular season would be compressed to 154 games in 166 days from 162 games in 186 days.

The World Series would be scheduled to end in the Nov. 10 range, with the exact time depending on discussions with broadcast partners.

As part of the plan, owners would guarantee a postseason players' pool of 60% of the gate of the first two first-round games plus $80 million for the remainder of the postseason, matching the 2019 pool.

Players previously rejected a proposal teams made Jan. 5 for expanded playoffs in exchange for extending the DH to the National League.

Defense decisive in Super Bowl of dynamic offenses

TAMPA BAY (AP)—Suggesting that defense could decide this Super Bowl might seem like heresy.

With Patrick Mahomes and the explosive Kansas City offense on one side, Tom Brady and Tampa Bay's resourceful attack on the other, expecting either D to be dominant or dangerous or definitive appears like folly.

Read on, though.

AP

In this Nov. 29, 2020 file photo, Kansas City Chiefs running back Clyde Edwards-Helaire (25) gets tripped up by Tampa Bay Buccaneers defensive back Ross Cockrell during the second half of an NFL game in Tampa, Fla.

Chiefs have the ball

Having clearly established itself as a force whether Mahomes is throwing to All-Pros Travis Kelce and Tyreek Hill, an impressive group of other targets, or handing off to Clyde Edwards-Helaire—not to mention, the quarterback taking off himself—Kansas City excels at scoring quickly. And often.

So where would Tampa Bay have any chance of defending the speed demons and shifty targets?

For one, the Bucs have the league's best linebacker corps: sack master Shaq Barrett, run stuffer Lavonte David, all-around standout Devin White. They are capable of at least giving Kelce, the sport's best tight end, some trouble.

The Bucs showed how strong their pass rush can be in last week's NFC championship victory over Green Bay. They sacked Aaron Rodgers five times, bothered him a slew more, and that was operating against a solid offensive line.

Mahomes has similar escapability to Rodgers, and is far more of a threat to flat out run the ball himself. Keeping him in the pocket and pressured is a key, and the Chiefs will be without starting left tackle Eric Fisher (Achilles tendon). Barrett, edge rusher Jason Pierre-Paul and inside presence Ndamukong Suh must be controlled by Kansas City.

With a strong pass rush, the Bucs can protect a secondary that makes big plays, but also can give them up. If safeties Antoine Winfield Jr., a rookie, and Jordan Whitehead can't go or are limited by injuries, that could spell trouble, and Chiefs touchdowns.

Carlton Davis, Jamel Dean and Sean Murphy-Bunting are the key cornerbacks trying to slow the KC express. No one on the Tampa defense can match the speed of Hill or Mecole Hardman.

Bucs have the ball

If Tampa Bay is on offense in the final minutes in a tight game, it's surely time for the Chiefs to worry.

There are only two ways to beat a Brady team in a Super Bowl. One is to outscore it in a shootout, as the Eagles did three years ago. The other is to mount consistent pressure up the middle and from the outside to make him throw before he wants to or can get set. Remember, Brady was intercepted on three consecutive series in the NFC championship.

The onus for protecting him falls on a solid O-line featuring left guard Ali Marpet and rookie right tackle Tristan Wirfs. They must deal with Kansas City DT Chris Jones and DE Frank Clark, plus an assortment of linebackers and defensive backs coming after their quarterback on blitzes.

Brady won't be running around to extend plays the way Mahomes can, but he also will be getting the ball out of his hand quickly and, at times, reading the Chiefs' coverage before they even show it.

In Mike Evans, Chris Godwin and Scotty Miller, plus tight ends Rob Gronkowski and Cameron Brate, Brady has receivers he is comfortable with. While the Chiefs are exceptional at safety with All-Pro Tyrann Mathieu and Daniel Sorensen, cornerbacks Charvarius Ward, L'Jarius Sneed, Bashaud Breeland and Rashad Fenton aren't at that level.

Special teams

The Bucs settled on Jaydon Mickens as the punt returner after several changes, mainly because of injuries. Signing Ryan Succop has been their best offseason decision and he has been reliable on field goals, though he missed five extra points. Punter Bradley Pinion has a strong leg, but punt coverage has been problematic in the postseason.

Punt units have been a bit of an issue for KC. Hardman's muff against Buffalo was the latest in a string of questionable decisions. But he also had a return touchdown this season.

Harrison Butker, like Succop, is dynamic on field goals, less dependable on extra points. Rookie punter Tommy Townsend has done a solid job.

Coaching

Two 60-somethings who have defied the trend to hire young coaches, many of whom are in their first go-arounds as the top guy. Andy Reid and Bruce Arians, both offensive masterminds who have contributed deeply to the fabric of pro football in the 2000s, are play-to-win types rather than the play-not-to-lose coaches who, inevitably, wind up losing.

Reid's Chiefs have the most innovative attack the NFL has seen since perhaps the Rams' Greatest Show on Turf. Credit OC Eric Bieniemy for some of that, but Reid always has tested the limits. DC Steve Spagnuolo is equally as aggressive, and his best teams always bring a potent pass rush. Ask Brady about how his 2007 unbeaten Patriots were manhandled by Spags' D in the Super Bowl.

Arians leaves the defense to coordinator Todd Bowles, and that arrangement has especially been effective the last two months. Brady has become more comfortable with the offensive schemes and OC Byron Leftwich, with many of the QB's favorite plays incorporated in game plans.

Intangibles

Kansas City seeks to become the first repeat champion since New England (led by Brady) in the 2003 and 2004 seasons. Reid would solidify his already likely Hall of Fame credentials with a victory. Bieniemy would further display why he deserves a head coaching job.

Brady, of course, goes after a seventh ring in his 10th Super Bowl. He has already proven how overwhelmingly responsible he was for the Patriots' dominance, but that actually drives him even harder to equal such achievements with his new team.

Oh yeah, there's this: The Super Bowl is being played on the Buccaneers' home field, a first in this 55th edition of the game. The stadium won't be filled to anything near capacity, but familiar surroundings certainly can't hurt.

Report: Rams attempt to trade for Rodgers

GREEN BAY—The Los Angeles Rams threw up a Hail Mary, but Brian Gutekunst and the Green Bay Packers batted it down without a second thought.

According to Sam Farmer of the Los Angeles Times, the Rams "considered making a hard run" at a trade for Packers quarterback Aaron Rodgers before eventually agreeing to a deal for Matthew Stafford, but the Packers dismissed the trade inquiries and were "adamant" about not trading the presumptive MVP.

The Rams also looked into Deshaun Watson of the Houston Texans, per Farmer, highlighting the wide net cast by Los Angeles to upgrade at quarterback via the trade market.

With Rodgers and Watson out of the picture, the Rams completed a deal that sent Jared Goff and future first-round picks to the Lions for Stafford, who wanted out of Detroit.

This is the first reported attempt at a trade for Rodgers, who is expected to win his third MVP award after throwing 48 touchdown passes and leading the NFL in completion percentage and passer rating in 2020. The Packers traded up in the first round to draft Jordan Love last April and may eventually move on from Rodgers to start the Love era, but no transition appears imminent.

In fact, it's certainly possible the conversation between the Rams and Packers was a quick one. The Rams, doing their due diligence in an attempt to get better at quarterback, had to call the Packers about Rodgers. An adamant denial suggests the Packers weren't at all interested in even having the conversation.

All signs continue to point to Rodgers being the Packers quarterback in 2021.

Failed investment

Prior to cutting bait Saturday, the Rams invested a ton in Goff. They spent the No. 1 pick in the 2016 draft on the California quarterback with the hope he would become the face of the franchise as the team transitioned from St. Louis to Los Angeles.

After a pair of Pro Bowls and a trip to the Super Bowl after the 2018 season, the Rams signed Goff to a four-year contract extension worth $134 million with a then-record $110 million in guarantees.

Since then, Goff's play has regressed. After throwing for 293 yards per game with 32 touchdowns and 12 interceptions in 2018, Goff has averaged 277 yards per game while totaling 42 touchdowns and 29 interceptions over the course of the past two seasons.

He has looked considerably more like the quarterback of the team that scored three points in a Super Bowl loss to the New England Patriots than the one who led an explosive offense that held up against the Kansas City Chiefs during the 2018 regular season.

The Rams realized the extension was a mistake. They were publicly open about Goff's shaky status prior to Saturday's deal. Head coach Sean McVay alluded to a quarterback competition next season after the Rams' playoff exit. General manager Les Snead later referred to Goff's status with the team as a "beautiful mystery."

And now they've parted with a haul of draft picks to shed the contract and upgrade at the position.

For Goff, who saw the bold print writing on the wall, he's happy to get a fresh start. Even if it comes with the moribund Lions.

Serena cruises in Australian Open tuneup

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)—Serena Williams restarted her lengthy quest for a 24th Grand Slam singles title with a 6-1, 6-4 win over Daria Gavrilova in an Australian Open tuneup tournament at Melbourne Park on Monday.

Williams has been stalled on 23 major singles titles since the 2017 Australian Open, when she was two months' pregnant with now-three-year-old daughter Olympia and when she beat her sister Venus in the final.

A 24th singles major would equal Margaret Court's Grand Slam total, but some of Court's wins came before the professional era.

Williams clinched the match with a blistering forehand to the open court on her first match point.

"I was somewhat focused, in the zone, I guess," Williams said in a post-match TV interview. "I am looking forward to the upcoming days."

Earlier, Coco Gauff didn't make it easy on herself. The 16-year-old American was up a service break in the second set and looked ready for straight-sets win until Jil Teichmann won the second-set tiebreaker. The players then went to a deciding-set tiebreaker before Gauff won 6-3, 6-7 (6), 7-6 (5) at the WTA's Gippsland Trophy.

"All the training I did in the off-season meant that I could go three tough sets," Gauff said on court after the match.

In another match at the same tournament, Australian Destanee Aiava beat Chloe Paquet 6-1, 4-6, 6-4 after saving 14 of 15 break points.

Bring on the crowd

World No. 1 Novak Djokovic found playing without crowds last season strange and he can't wait to wow the fans in the stands at his 17th Australian Open.

Some 25,000-30,000 fans will be admitted to Melbourne Park on each day of the Grand Slam and Djokovic got a taste of what was to come when he played an exhibition match in Adelaide after coming out of quarantine on Friday.

"I had goosebumps coming into the court playing in front of the fans again after 12 months of not experiencing that," the Serbian told reporters on Sunday.

"After playing professional tennis for more than 15 years, this is one of the biggest driving forces or motivations, inspirations that I have, playing in front of a crowd.

"Feeding off that energy, exchanging that great passion and joy that I have for the sport and the fans have for the sport."

Djokovic said the blister on his right hand that restricted him to one set in Adelaide on Friday was "nothing major" and would not be an issue when he leads Serbia in their ATP Cup title defense this week.

Having upset some locals when he sent a letter to organizers asking for the quarantine conditions to be changed, Djokovic expressed his gratitude at being able to play in Australia.

"I'm grateful, as I think most of us that are here in Australia, that we have an opportunity to practice and to play and to compete in the sport that we love," he said. "So we are all excited to be here."

Six events

All six tuneup tournaments are being played this week at Melbourne Park ahead of the Feb. 8 start of the Australian Open.

The first major of the year was delayed by three weeks to allow for COVID-19 protocols which required all people arriving into Australia to spend 14 days in quarantine.

The biggest men's tournament is the ATP Cup team event, which starts Tuesday. The other men's tournaments are the Great Ocean Road Open and the Murray River Open.

In addition to Gippsland Trophy, the WTA has the Yarra Valley Classic and the Grampians Trophy. The Grampians event is a 28-draw tournament and open only to players who were forced into hard lockdown for 14 days without the benefit of practice because of positive COVID-19 cases on their charter flights to Australia.

Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova beaten Japan's Misaki Doi 6-1, 6-4 in a first-round match at the Yarra River Classic, the same tournament that includes Williams. The 11th-seeded Pavlyuchenkova has been a quarterfinalist in three of the last four years at the Australian Open.

In the second round, No. 13 Danielle Collins of the United States beat Nina Stojanovic 6-2, 6-1. Seventh-seeded Petra Martic had a 4-6, 6-3, 6-2 win over Vera Lapko.

Corentin Moutet of France won a tough first-round match over Frances Tiafoe, beating the American 3-6, 6-4, 6-4 at the Murray River Open. The 21-year-old Moutet had to overcome a sluggish start before he found his rhythm against 2019 Australian Open quarterfinalist Tiafoe. The Frenchman outlasted Tiafoe in the third set to fight off break points and take a 3-1 lead. "It was so nice to play a match," Moutet told the ATP website. "It was a long time since I've played a match, especially in front of people. A tough match, but definitely a lot of pleasure." Two Americans advanced, with fifth-seeded Tommy Paul beating Cameron Norrie 4-6, 7-6 (2) 6-3 and Mackenzie McDonald upsetting 14th-seeded Richard Gasquet 7-6 (2), 7-5.

AP

United States' Serena Williams makes a backhand return to Australia's Daria Gavrilova during a tuneup tournament ahead of the Australian Open tennis championships in Melbourne, Australia, Monday, Feb. 1, 2021.

Saipan Marathon 2021 postponed

The Saipan Marathon 2021, originally scheduled for March, has been postponed until further notice due to COVID-19 pandemic.

The Marianas Visitors Authority announced the postponement yesterday, citing coronavirus concerns and the anticipated low demand for travel.

"Saipan has been able to minimize coronavirus infection with a strict entry requirement for all passengers, including a five-day quarantine period, and strong community cooperation with social distancing, mask-wearing, and handwashing," said MVA managing director Priscilla Iakopo. "We are grateful these measures have help prevent any community spread in the last five months in The Marianas. We will continue to monitor how the coronavirus and travel situation develops over the coming months.

Last year, MVA still managed to hold the Saipan Marathon and 540 athletes took part in the event, which included a marathon, half marathon, 10K, and 5K.

For more information, visit the MVA website at www.mymarianas.com. ***(MVA)***

KNIGHTS

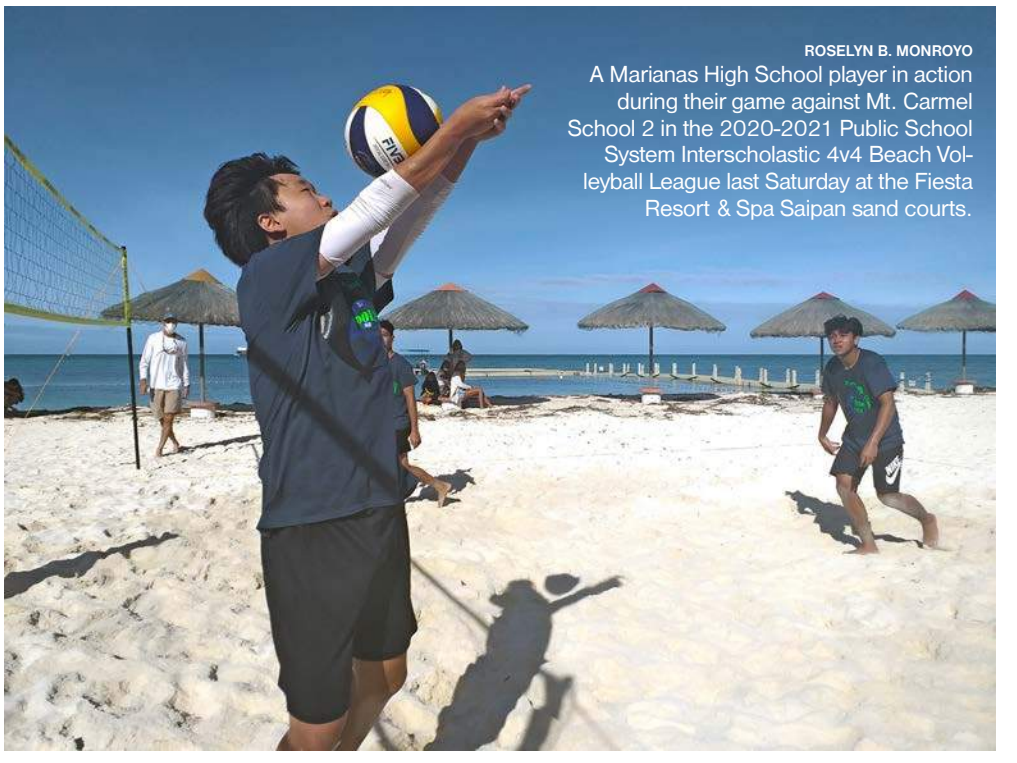
From Page 20

on Court 1, 21-16. The Dolphins then closed out the day with a 21-17 triumph over Agape 2 on Court 4, 21-17.

Other results on Court 4 had MHS 2 outclassing Agape 2, 21-12; SIS 2 also prevailing against Agape 2, 21-7; and Mt. Carmel 2 defeating MHS 2, 21-15. Over on Court 3, GCA debuted with a 15-21 win over MHS 2; Mt, Carmel 2 nipped MHS 3, 21-19; SIS 1 downed MHS 2, 21-18; and MHS 2 nosed out Agape 1, 21-19.

On Court 1, Agape 1 had a split, winning against SIS 1 first, 21-19, before losing to GCA, 9-21. MHS 3 also played on Court 1 and topped MHS 2, 21-15. On Court 2, SIS 1 triumphed in the all-Geckos duel after taking a 21-15 victory against SIS 2, while the latter bounced back with a 21-16 win over MHS 3. In other results on Court 2, GCA topped SIS 1, 21-13, and Mt. Carmel 2 beat SIS 2, 21-15.

Meanwhile, the boys division teams will take a break this weekend to give way to the girls division matches and will return to the Fiesta sand courts on Feb. 13 for the last set of preliminary games.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

A Marianas High School player in action during their game against Mt. Carmel School 2 in the 2020-2021 Public School System Interscholastic 4v4 Beach Volleyball League last Saturday at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan sand courts.

Westbrook, Beal's late 3s lift Wizards over Nets

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

Defense decisive in Super Bowl of dynamic offenses

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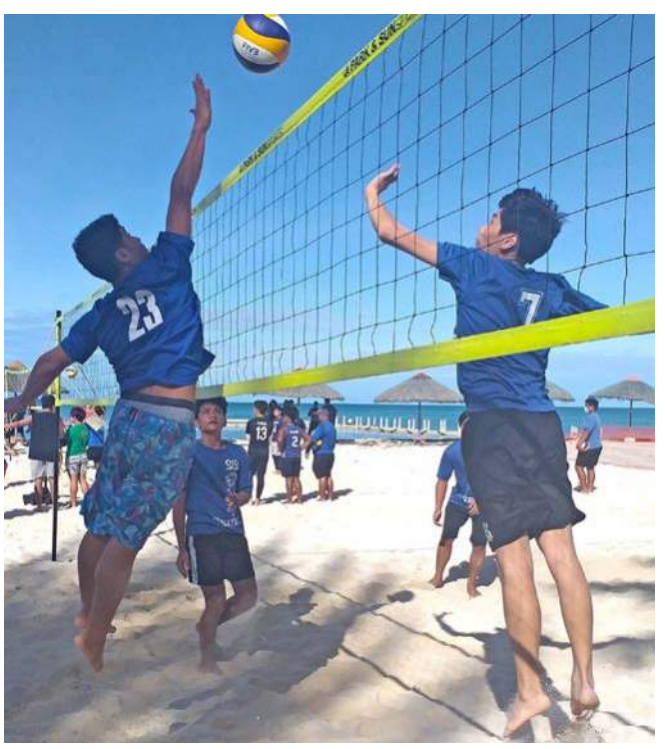
Knights perfect in opener

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Mt. Carmel School 1's Merrick Toves returns to Grace Christian Academy during their game in the 2020-2021 Public School System Interscholastic 4v4 Beach Volleyball League last Saturday at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan sand courts.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

It's a sweet sweep for Mt. Carmel School 1 in the opening week of the boys high school division in the 2020-2021 Public School System Interscholastic 4v4 Beach Volleyball League.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Grace Christian Academy, left, and Saipan International School players battle in the net.

The Knights debuted against Agape Christian School on Court 4 at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan last Saturday and took a 21-13 win before prevailing in their next five matches for an unbeaten 6-0 record in the 10-team field. Mt. Carmel 1 has Sam Ryu, Jun Beom Kim, Merrick Toves, Jeremiah Diaz, Richard Steele, and Brandon Lee on its roster, while Randy Steele calls the shot for the squad.

"Strong work for our boys this weekend despite a loaded schedule," Randy said.

After their first victory in the season, the Knights got their second on Court 1 as they eased past Saipan International School 2, 21-7. Next up for Mt. Carmel 1 was Grace Christian Academy and Randy's wards extended their streak to three after beating the Eagles on Court 3, 21-12.

The Knights stayed on Court 3 for their fourth game and this time held Marianas High School 1 to single digit for a 21-8 triumph. Mt. Carmel 1 then moved to Court 2 to face Agape 2 and kept its winning ways after topping the Torchbearers, 21-11.

For their final assignment in the opener, Mt. Carmel 1 players were incidentally pitted against their schoolmates playing for Mt. Carmel 2 and the former went on to complete the sweep with a 21-15 win on Court 1.

Mt. Carmel 1 was the lone squad to have an unblemished record in the opening week of the boys division to lead the team standings. MHS 1, with its 4-1 mark, is in second place and is followed by GCA (3-1), SIS 2 (3-2), Mt. Carmel 2 (3-2), MHS 2 (2-4), SIS 1 (1-3), MHS 3 (1-3) Agape 1 (1-4), and Agape 2 (0-4).

Before falling to Mt. Carmel 1, MHS 1 won its first three matches—downing MCS 2, 21-14, and MHS 3, 21-12, on Court 2, and edging Agape 1

See KNIGHTS on Page 19

Quan is new NMIVA president

The Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association board of directors has elected Somia Quan as president.

Joining Quan on the board are vice president Ryan Camacho and directors Tyce Mister, Shawn Davis, Kathy Winkfield, Chris Nelson, and Mychal Omar.

"I am very delighted to be a part of an organization that has deep roots in our sports community and humbled by the board's confidence in me to lead our team. Former president Laurie Peterka and the NMIVA boards before us have an extensive accomplishments list and we have some big shoes to fill, but I am excited to continue the successes of our national volleyball federation," Quan said.

The new NMIVA head played for the CNMI (indoor) in the Micronesian Games in 2002 and 2006. She earned her Bachelor of Science degree from Boston College and received her Master's in Business Administration from the University of Hawaii at Manoa. She is the Corporate Projects Manager in the Business Development Division at J.C. Tenorio Enterprises.

Camacho, just like Quan, also donned the CNMI colors before, having played in the indoor competition in the Micro Games in Yap in 2018.

"I look forward to working with all members of the board and community and supporting our president with the development of volleyball in our community," Camacho said.

Nelson, another former national team player, expressed the board's support to the new NMIVA president and vice president

"Both are not just players, but leaders and doers, and they have coaching and teaching experience. Our board is really excited and happy with our choice, and we think the volleyball community is really going to benefit." Nelson said.

The newly elected NMIVA board has pledged to help continue to grow the sport of volleyball, both indoors and on the beach.

Founded in 2004, the NMIVA is the Northern Marianas Sports Association's recognized member national federation for the CNMI for beach and indoor volleyball. The association is an accredited member of the Oceania Zonal Volleyball Association, the Asian Volleyball Confederation (AVC), and the Federation Internationale de Volleyball. The NMIVA maintains strong working relationships with the CNMI Public School System interscholastic sports program (PSS), the Commonwealth Coalition of Private Schools, Sports Association (CCOPSSA) and with our neighbors in the south, the Guam Volleyball Association. For more information, email Winkfield at kwinkfield16@gmail.com. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association president Somia Quan, seated center, joins the NMIVA board of directors for a group photo after the election of officers late last month.